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Inter-Arab Affairs

'Abd-al-Majid Marks Kuwait Liberation Anniversary

NC2402220593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2013 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Excerpt] Cairo, 24 Feb (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has stated that the Arab nation cannot realize its aspirations unless we insist on the principle of "candidness before reconciliation."

In a statement today to mark the second anniversary of the liberation of Kuwait, 'Abd-al-Majid said that acting on this principle, whoever wrongs a brother should take the initiative and undo the wrong he has done.

Referring to a recent announcement by a senior Iraqi official that the Kuwaiti file has been closed, 'Abd-al-Majid remarked that this requires Iraq to implement every international resolution fully, including those concerning the border demarcations and the payment of reparation and the return of the POW's. He said the Iraqi mass media must abide by the principles of the Arab solidarity charter endorsed by Arab kings and presidents in 1965 to ensure a favorable atmosphere for achieving the desired reconciliation.

'Abd-al-Majid said there was a need to abide by and uphold the principles and objectives of the Arab League Charter and agreements and the UN Charter, because they provide protection, not only for pan-Arab security, but for the individual security of each Arab state.

He said we must all work to set up an Arab court of justice that will act as the proper legal forum that resolves all our differences and disputes through a candid dialogue within the Arab League, the home of all Arabs.

The secretary general added that the new world order stresses the importance of major economic blocs, leaving no room for individual states on the margin. We must enhance ties of Arab cooperation and rise above past disputes, he stressed.

'Abd-al-Majid called on Arabs to unite their views for the sake of future generations. This will only be possible through consolidated Arab efforts that realize the Arab people's aspirations for development, stability, and peace, he said.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid hoped that by the third anniversary of the liberation of Kuwait, all the Kuwaiti POW's will have returned to their homes and families and the Arab nation will have buried the past with all its negative aspects. [passage omitted]

Arab League Secretary General Views Peace Process

AU2502112693 Berlin NEUES DEUTSCHLAND in German 23 Feb 93 p 7

[Interview with Ahmad 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, secretary general of the Arab League, by Juergen Dietrich in Cairo; date not given: "It Is Up to Israel To Take the Initiative"]

[Text] [Dietrich] What do you expect from U.S. Secretary of State Christopher's present trip to the Middle East?

['Abd-al-Majid] I hope, of course, that this visit will be successful. We in the Arab League believe that the new U.S. Administration is seriously interested in continuing the peace process as soon as possible. The greatest obstacle is the deportation of the 400 Palestinians by Israel. Here a solution is urgently required, that is, according to the resolution that was adopted by the Security Council two months ago. This resolution must be respected and implemented. We hope that Mr. Christopher will advocate this and be successful. That is the wish of all Arab states. It would promote the peace process.

[Dietrich] In your opinion, what has to be done?

['Abd-al-Majid] Israel created the problem. The deported Palestinians are the victims of Israeli action. Therefore, it is up to Israel to take the initiative for a settlement. With the objective of easing the situation, so that we can continue the course taken in Madrid. That would be in the interest of all those involved.

[Dietrich] You want to visit the deportees. When will you do that and what is your objective?

['Abd-al-Majid] The date is being coordinated with the Lebanese Government. With this trip, we will demonstrate our solidarity with these people, whose fate touches all Arabs and the people of the whole world. At the same time, this affair should not obstruct the peace process.

However, support also has to be shown for the position of the government in Beirut. The Arab League fully agrees with the Lebanese attitude.

[Dietrich] The opinion that the Arab states have not given up their old objective, the elimination of the Jewish state, is being heard again and again from Israel. What answer can you give to that?

['Abd-al-Majid] Even before the opening of the Middle East conference in September 1991, the Arab League took a decisive step. For the first time in the history of the conflict, it called on all affected parties to come to a peaceful solution on the basis of Resolutions 242 and 338. Thus, the Arab state recognized the principle "land

for peace" and, at the same time, the Israeli state's right to exist. Our position on this basic question is clear and unambiguous.

[Dietrich] Regarding the deportees, the Arabs seem to have found a common language. Could there still be solo attempts without the Palestinians?

['Abd-al-Majid] We vote for justice. Therefore, we support the Security Council resolution, which is in line with international law. The Arab states and the League are prepared to participate constructively in its implementation. These deportations must not obstruct the process of negotiations. However, one should not forget that there are UN resolutions on it and the Middle East settlement as a whole. It will no longer be believed that those who want to ignore Resolution 799 and recognize Resolutions 242 and 338 as a basis for a solution. That is the danger for the whole peace process. At the same time, any solo attempt would be most deplorable. I can only hope that none will be made. For there can be no Middle East settlement that excludes the Palestinians.

[Dietrich] If the bilateral talks are resumed, will you expect a speedy breakthrough?

['Abd-al-Majid] I assure you that we are all praying for success.

Gulf States 'Racing To Buy' Advanced Arms

NC2502080993 Paris AFP in English 0416 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Report by Nadim Kawash]

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Feb 25 (AFP)—Gulf Arab states are racing to buy advanced weapons to offset a shortage in armed forces personnel that underscored their vulnerability during the war for Kuwait.

The six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states plan to spend more than 50 billion dollars by the year 2000 on aircraft, tanks, armoured vehicles, missiles and frigates, military experts said.

But they said the 12-year-old Gulf alliance would not follow Iran's example in buying submarines, although some countries showed interest in submarines displayed at an international arms show in Abu Dhabi last week.

"I don't think GCC states will want to appear they are in an arms race with Iran," one expert said. Besides, "from the military point of view, the shallow Gulf waters are not suitable for submarine warfare."

Russian experts at the Abu Dhabi exhibition said some Gulf military delegates had shown interest in the Kilo class submarines, one of which was delivered to Iran in November as part of a three-unit package.

Independent military estimates put Iran's regular Army at 750,000 troops compared with the GCC at 185,000. Iraq had more than one million troops before its invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

According to defence sources, the number of GCC troops could now be much lower than it was before the 1991 Gulf war as most states have demobilized foreign soldiers in their armies.

But except in tanks, the GCC has more weapons than its giant neighbours.

Their jets are estimated at 992, compared with 540 in Iran and 700 in Iraq before the invasion of Kuwait. The GCC also has 240 navy units while Iran has 148 and Iraq had 49.

GCC nations also have an estimated 1,160 tanks and 3,230 armoured vehicles, while Iran has 1,100 tanks and 2,000 armoured vehicles, and Iraq about 6,000 tanks and 3,000 armoured vehicles.

Most of Iraq's tanks were reported to have been destroyed during the allied offensive to retake Kuwait.

Last month, Saudi Arabia and Oman announced they would buy British Challenger tanks. Riyadh is also negotiating to buy frigates from Canada.

Qatar and Bahrain have also sought to bolster their armies after the Gulf War, while Kuwait alone is expected to spend 15 billion dollars on arms by the year 2000.

The other GCC member, the UAE, said last week it would buy 436 French Leclerc tanks for more than 3.5 billion dollars and would pay 300 million dollars for an air force project with the U.S. company Westinghouse.

The UAE is also engaged in negotiations for new arms deals with British firms, including the purchase of about 15 Lynx helicopters.

"The Gulf has emerged as the largest defence market, followed by the Far East, as the rest of the world arms market is collapsing due to recession," said Amin Badr-al-Din, head of the UAE Army's offset programme. Under the programme, arms exporters invest part of each deal's value in the importing country.

"The pent-up demand of the last seven years will result in considerable amounts of money being spent over the next few years," he said.

Defence sources said the UAE alone was expected to spend more than eight billion dollars on arms imports in the next five years and could buy the new version of the French-built Mirage 2000, expected in 1996. The UAE already has 36 Mirage 2000s.

Palestinian Affairs

Agreement on Return to Talks Possible 25 Feb

TA2502073993 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Interview with Dr. Nazmi al-Ju'bah, member of the advisory committee to the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, by Mikha Friedman and Goni Mardor—live]

[Text] [Friedman] You have probably heard about some proposals the Americans raised with Israel, such as allowing the return of some deportees not according to ordinary procedures and of some others through the review committees. Could such moves satisfy you and make you return to the negotiating table?

[Al-Ju'bah] No, that would not satisfy us. The negotiations were stuck even before the deportations. We have been working on two planes: allowing the return of the deportees on the one hand, and a preliminary understanding with the Israelis about the future of the peace process on the other. We have been talking about how the negotiations would be conducted in the next few months if we return to the negotiating table, and about renouncing deportations in the future.

[Mardor] Sir, what do you perceive as progress in the wake of Secretary of State Christopher's visit here?

[Al-Ju'bah] First of all, we have a new partner in the U.S. Administration. This new partner is taking a great interest and wants to be a real partner; not just to see with its own eyes but to be a real partner to the negotiations with us and the Israelis; a partner which will at times, perhaps, sit with us and with the Israelis. There have been very interesting proposals about new points of view, proposals on returning deportees and stopping the policy of deportations in general.

[Friedman] You know that in any event Israel will not agree to allow the return of all the deportees at once. This being the case, could the Palestinians be mollified by achievements made in other areas?

[Al-Ju'bah] The problem is not just returning the deportees. The real problem is that Israel should not repeat a policy of deportations in the future.

[Friedman] Rabin has said that deportations are not a policy; he said as much yesterday.

[Al-Ju'bah] What Rabin said is not enough for us. We think that Israel should clearly and publicly announce that it will not deport anybody in the future. That will satisfy us.

[Mardor] You are aware of the understanding attained with Israel and of Israel's willingness to implement confidence-building measures in the territories. Does this affect your position?

[Al-Ju'bah] It affects it a great deal. The situation in the West Bank and Gaza has deteriorated. The general situation in the Gaza is inhuman. One cannot live that way or conduct negotiations if Israel's policy in Gaza continues to be the same as it has been in the past few months.

[Friedman] A few minutes ago we received a report, still unconfirmed, that prior to his departure from Israel Christopher may meet again with the members of the Palestinian delegation. Do you know anything about it?

[Al-Ju'bah] That is possible.

[Friedman] If so, it should be happening right now.

[Al-Ju'bah] That is possible.

[Friedman] Where?

[Al-Ju'bah] I cannot tell, but that is possible.

[Friedman] To sum up, do you gather from the talks with your colleagues and what you have been hearing that until the Palestinian delegation does not announce that it is prepared to return to the peace talks the negotiations will not resume and that the other Arab countries will not report to the talks if the Palestinians do not show up? Is that what you gather?

[Al-Ju'bah] I think the Arab countries will not return to the negotiating table if we do not. They have specifically told us as much. We hope to solve the problem today so that we may go to Washington in a month or so.

[Mardor] Could you not suddenly find yourselves in an isolated position if the Arab countries make it to the negotiating table nevertheless while you stay out?

[Al-Ju'bah] We will not get to such a situation.

[Friedman] You say you hope the problem will be solved today. What must happen today?

[Al-Ju'bah] We must reach an agreement.

[Friedman] And you are saying that such an agreement may be attained today.

[Al-Ju'bah] That is possible.

[Friedman] Sir, thank you very much.

Delegation Members on Resumption

NC2402220293 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2121 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 24 Feb (MENA)—Members of the Palestinian delegation to the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations have said that the delegation will not take part in negotiations unless Israel responds to UN Security Council Resolution 799, which provides for the immediate return of all deportees to their homes.

Speaking to AL-AHRAM in its Thursday, 25 February, issue, Palestinian delegation head Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi

demanded that Israel not be treated as though it is above the law, as this creates a crack in the wall of the peace process.

We insist that all deportees be allowed to return in one batch in accordance with Resolution 799, he said; adding: We are opposed to a phased return and any attempt to circumvent the resolution, as it would indirectly legitimize the deportation policy.

'Abd-al-Shafi said the deportation policy is against human rights and said the UN resolution made that point. We, therefore, insist that Resolution 799 be fully implemented before we go to the negotiations.

'Abd-al-Shafi added that the Palestinian message to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher highlights the fact that there is no justification for going along with Israel on the resolution. The letter also poses certain questions as to why Israel has failed to implement it to date.

In similar statements to AL-AHRAM, delegation member Sa'ib 'Urayqat emphasizes the need for Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to agree not to deport any more Palestinians. He noted that this is bound to pave the way before the peace process.

'Urayqat said the demands put forward to Christopher emphasize five crucial points that have to do with human rights, genocide, the constant curfew, taxation, and deportations.

Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Palestinian delegation's advisory panel, denied reports that he supports the resumption of negotiations. This is untrue, and I have not made any such statement, he said.

Al-Husayni added that unless Christopher puts forward a new solution for the deportee issue, the peace process will be stalled.

Christopher Meetings, Officials' Comments Reported

'Ashrawi on Meeting

JN2402122093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1030 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Interview with Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokesman for the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, by 'Umar Zaydani, carried within the "With the Midday Events" program—recorded]

[Text] [Zaydani] Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, first let's begin with the position which you presented yesterday at your meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Christopher?

['Ashrawi] The position is not new. It is the legal and humanitarian position on the deportation. It stresses the need to implement Resolution 799 and to force Israel to implement the Security Council resolutions, in addition to other human rights issues. We have spoken in detail about human rights. We also spoke about the requisites of rendering the peace process successful. We emphasized to him, first of all, that we are committed to peace, and that the decision to participate in the peace process was a democratic decision made by the Palestinian leadership, and we are committed to this decision. But Israel has raised obstacles, and it has to remove these obstacles in order to resume the process.

[Zaydani] Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, do you accept the idea of phased repatriation of the deportees, as President Mubarak suggested in coordination with Yasir 'Arafat, as reports said?

['Ashrawi] As far as I know, this has not taken place, and we have not discussed the repatriation of the deportees in stages. What Secretary Christopher presented is the agreement and the deal concluded between the United States and Israel as an implementation of Resolution 799. We said that this deal does not tackle the essence of the problem, which is the illegitimacy of deportation, and that Israel should be forced not to resort to deportation in the future. This subject has not been dealt with in our talks with the secretary.

[Zaydani] Have you presented him with documents dealing with the situation in the territories, changes in the Madrid formula, and the possibility that Palestinians from the diaspora and East Jerusalem join the Palestinian delegation?

['Ashrawi] We have presented several documents. We presented a message from President 'Arafat. We presented a long memorandum that covers all issues. We also presented a file on human rights and another file on personal petitions and messages on special issues. As for our proposals, there were proposals and demands that deal with the framework of the negotiation process, in addition to its contents, and the need to force Israel to abide by the terms of reference. We also spoke about the U.S. role and the role of the countries sponsoring the process. These are some of the issues tackled by the memorandum.

[Zaydani] Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, a final question: Christopher has come to Israel carrying the commitment of all Arab parties to the peace talks and to the resumption of peace talks and the distinction they draw between the deportees issue and the peace talks. Doesn't this put you in an embarrassing position?

['Ashrawi] I don't see embarrassment in this. The decision should be made collectively. As you know, the decision should be made after the meeting of the Arab foreign ministers. If the Arab parties have given a positive reply before the meeting, then, in my opinion, this does not affect the Palestinian position, which adheres to the Palestinian right and international legitimacy. These are the bases of the peace process. In my opinion, the Arab parties have not made a commitment about the forthcoming round unless there is a solution to the deportees issue and the Palestinian demands.

[Zaydani] Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, thank you very much.

'Ashrawi on New Proposals

TA2402184293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Before tonight's meeting with Israeli leaders Secretary of State Christopher held talks with a delegation of five Palestinians from the territories. After the talk Palestinian spokeswoman Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi said several proposals were raised that the Palestinians are now considering. Mark Weiss reports:

[Begin recording] [Weiss] The five Palestinians met with Secretary of State Christopher for almost 2 hours at the American Consulate in Jerusalem. Afterwards the Palestinians traveled to the delegation headquarters in East Jerusalem, the Orient House, and spokeswoman Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi described the talk as businesslike and detailed. She stressed that several proposals were raised that are worth thinking about:

['Ashrawi] And we will be discussing and we will be relaying these ideas, and let's hope that we will be able to come up with something new, but right now everything is still pending, but there are some proposals that are worth looking into.

[Weiss] 'Ashrawi refused to provide details of the proposals, but described them as evolving ideas rather than new proposals, and stressed that she deliberately did not want to raise expectations. 'Ashrawi did say the proposals were not Israeli ideas:

['Ashrawi] I don't think so. Nothing was presented as Israeli. We discussed the American position and the Palestinian position. I don't think the secretary was playing the role of mediator or intermediary. I think he was presenting American positions, he was asking questions of us as well, and we asked him questions about the American position, and I think it's quite possible that he might discuss the American position with the Israelis, but he did not relay the Israeli position to us at all.

[Weiss] The new ideas that emerged will be discussed by Palestinian leaders in the territories over the coming weeks, and of course by the PLO leadership in Tunis. Only then and after consultations with other Arab states will a final discussion on Palestinian participation in the Washington peace talks be made. 'Ashrawi talked about a comprehensive approach to all the problems, and not just the deportation issue. The Palestinian leadership both here and in Tunis has to decide whether the new proposals talked about are significant enough to enable the delegation to attend renewed talks, despite the current public mood in the territories against participation. [end recording]

'Ashrawi Sees 'Few Obstacles'

TA2502090493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0805 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Report on telephone interview with Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokesman of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, by Razi Barqay within the "It's All Talk" program; direct questions and answers in English, followed by Barqay's translation and comments in Hebrew—recorded "a few minutes ago"]

[Text] [Barqay] I spoke with Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi a few minutes ago, and I got the impression that in the wake of their talks with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher the Palestinians are more pleased than us initially about several understandings attained, which have not yet been reported by the media. Throughout my conversation with her she sought to tone down the impression that disagreements, as it were, persist. Several obstacles remain, she said, but less than we feared.

['Ashrawi] I was surprised that there were very few obstacles, actually; that there was a receptivity, a willingness to listen, and he took our concerns extremely seriously.

[Barqay] What are the main obstacles?

['Ashrawi] Of course, the main and most obvious obstacle continues to be the whole issue of deportation and the legality of deportation and of the necessity to implement Security Council resolutions.

[Barqay] 'Ashrawi said the main obstacle impeding the resumption of the talks was the question of the deportees. But, even on this point, her formulations were very optimistic. We received several proposals on how to solve the issue, she disclosed.

['Ashrawi] We heard last night that there were some serious considerations, but we are still pursuing these issues; we're following up.

[Barqay] Let's make it clear. You are not coming back to Washington unless the problem of the deportees is solved.

['Ashrawi] This is not at all what I said. What I said was very clear. I said there are several obstacles. We are dealing with all of them, and we are hoping to be able to resume negotiations once the obstacles are removed.

[Barqay] Although she was not prepared to go into details, she rejected my assumption that the Palestinians will not go to Washington before the issue of the deportees has been solved.

Two other highlights in 'Ashrawi's remarks: First, Christopher specifically told her that for the time being the U.S. Administration would not be resuming the dialogue with the PLO.

['Ashrawi] I heard in the press some reports which were entirely untrue. What he said is that there is no current intention to renew a dialogue. That's as far as the American answer is concerned. Any other things that were in the press are untrue.

[Barqay] The second highlight pertained to her regular contacts with Yasir 'Arafat or, as she called him, president 'Arafat. We have indeed reported to him about the course of the talks, she said.

['Ashrawi] We did report to president 'Arafat and to the Executive Committee in Tunis, and there is ongoing discussion. At the same time, they are studying very carefully and intensively all the suggestions and ideas that were raised. And, as I said, it's a two-way street. We are pursuing these issues.

[Barqay] My last question to Mrs. 'Ashrawi had to do with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. I asked her: Can you understand the Israeli need to fight such an extreme movement?

['Ashrawi] We understand fears, of course; we have our own fears. Fears are legitimate, but they should never be used as a rationale to carry out either illegal acts or acts of cruelty on any side. I don't think that fear justifies irrational actions. One has to be able to use fear and overcome it, and to carry out constructive steps to remove the reasons. But, to lash out irrationally and to create repercussions that would generate greater conflict and, hence, greater fear—it seems to me this would be counterproductive. I think it has to be dealt with seriously and responsibly, it has to be faced and, at the same time, you cannot create a new spiral of violence as a result of that.

'Arafat Message to Christopher

TA2402162493 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Excerpt] A short time ago Secretary of State Warren Christopher ended his lengthy meeting with the top Palestinian echelon, including the Palestinian delegation members and advisers 'Ashrawi and al-Husayni. Our correspondent in the territories Udi Segal reports:

The meeting lasted for 2 hours. The five Palestinian representatives just left the U.S. Consulate building. The meeting between U.S. Secretary of State Christopher and the five Palestinians was held in the U.S. Consulate building in Agron Street in Jerusalem. Christopher arrived in the Consulate at 1415, and the Palestinians came 40 minutes later, after agreeing by telephone to postpone the meeting by 30 minutes.

The different make-up of today's Palestinian delegation points to the different aims as compared to yesterday's courtesy call. During yesterday's meeting the two sides presented their positions—especially the Palestinians' adamant position on the deportees affair—without entering into practical negotiations. The Palestinian team for today's meeting is in fact a five-member work team, contrary to the 10 Palestinians who met Christopher yesterday. Today's team was headed by Faysal al-Husayni, Hanan 'Ashrawi, and Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, and two delegation members who are responsible for coordinating the practical work papers relating to the negotiations: Ghassan al-Khatib and Nazmi al-Ju'bah. It appears, however, that today, too, the main issues on the agenda were finding a formula for overcoming the deportees problem, and an additional message from Yasir 'Arafat calling for renewing the dialogue between the United States and the PLO. [passage omitted]

[Later on the same newsreel Udi Segal adds the following: "The news conference held by the Palestinian delegation at the Orient House following the meeting with Christopher ended a short time ago. The bottom line is that nothing new was achieved, no joint declaration was made by the Palestinian and the American side after the meeting.

["Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokesman of the Palestinian delegation, said that several outstanding issues have been raised and that neither the Palestinians nor the Americans had anything new to present. From remarks made by the Palestinians it transpires that no progress was made on the deportees affair, with the Palestinians still demanding their immediate repatriation. At the same time it appears that the Palestinians were promised that additional measures in the human rights sphere will be implemented, and that concrete steps will be taken in this area. On other issues, such as East Jerusalem representation on the delegation, the resumption of the dialogue between the United States and the PLO, and changing the Madrid formula, the Palestinians received an unequivocal negative answer from the Americans.

["To sum up: little progress was made from the Palestinian point of view, and consequently they said during the news conference that they had nothing to present and that they have to discuss various issues in detail in order to assess the American proposals."]

Delegation Member Interviewed

JN2402193593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1620 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Telephone interview with Ghassan al-Khatib, member of the Palestinian delegation to the Arab-Israeli talks, by Sa'id Mu'addi, carried within "With the Events" program, following a Palestinian delegation's meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Jerusalem on 24 February—recorded]

[Text] [Mu'addi] Ghassan al-Khatib, good evening.

[Al-Khatib] Good evening.

[Mu'addi] The second meeting with the U.S. secretary of state concluded this evening. What are the results of this meeting?

[Al-Khatib] In fact, this meeting has not produced any tangible results. During this meeting, we continued to discuss a set of ideas which aim to find a way out of the current impasse resulting from the deportations and the dead end reached by the negotiations. Therefore, discussions dealt with these two issues, especially the negotiations. Many interesting ideas worthy of being studied

have been raised. However, such ideas are not sufficient to make us feel that there are prospects for a breakthrough. We have noted down this set of ideas and gave them a set of ideas on the requirements that must be made available so that the negotiations could be resumed. Such requirements cover questions of human rights, deportations, and the essence of the negotiations. We have listened to their views. Each side promised to study what it heard. We will study what we have heard, and will contact our leadership in Tunis for consultation. We will be in touch with the Americans to resume discussions later.

[Mu'addi] Has the U.S. secretary proposed possible dates for the convocation of the next round of negotiations?

[Al-Khatib] No. The secretary has not proposed any dates at all. This is because both sides are convinced that there is a set of obstacles that must be overcome first so that the Americans can issue invitations.

[Mu'addi] What is the acceptable compromise concerning the deportees issue that would make it possible for the Palestinians to participate in the next round of negotiations?

[Al-Khatib] In fact, our position is still the same—the need for Israel to approve and accept UN Security Council Resolution 799 providing for allowing the deportees to return home. This is still the Palestinian position. Also, Israel still insists on refusing to recognize the resolution. Therefore, so far, there is no tangible progress on this front. However, there are U.S. efforts to resolve this problem.

[Mu'addi] What was the U.S. secretary's stand on this Palestinian position?

[Al-Khatib] The U.S. secretary listened to this position, as he earlier did regarding the Israeli position. He promised to continue to exert efforts to overcome this problem.

[Mu'addi] Have you conveyed a message through Secretary Christopher to the prime minister, who will meet with him—or who is probably meeting with him now—on the Palestinian side's conditions for participating in the next round of negotiations?

[Al-Khatib] Actually, we have not done so directly, but we assume that the guest secretary will communicate the Palestinian vision of the requirements of the negotiations and concerning the Palestinian deportees issue and the essence of the negotiations itself. We assume that he will do so, but we have not asked him to convey a specific message.

[Mu'addi] Ghassan al-Khatib, member of the Palestinian negotiating team, thank you very much.

[Al-Khatib] Not at all.

Editorials, Commentaries on Christopher Visit

Negotiations no Deportees

PM2402143093 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 23 Feb 93 p17

[George Sam'an article: "Negotiations Before Deportees"]

[Text] The Arab states visited by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher had no alternative but to insist on the negotiations and urge their early resumption. Until the peace process is resumed, they also have no alternative but to insist on the repatriation of all the deportees. There is no practical contradiction between the two positions. In practice, the negotiations are already under way through the U.S. secretary of state now touring the region. He has confirmed that his country is a full partner in the process. There is nothing to prevent the Arabs from insisting on playing the deportees card until the last moment before they return to the negotiating table.

The Arabs also have a right to insist on the implementation of Resolution 799 calling on Israel to take back all the deportees immediately, but not to the point of sacrificing the negotiations or threatening to suspend them, because that would torpedo the peace process based on Resolutions 242 and 338. The Arabs certainly have no interest in torpedoing the peace process through which they all seek to regain the occupied territories and ensure fulfillment of the Palestinian people's legitimate rights. There are about 2 million Palestinians in the diaspora and 2 million living under occupation and threatened with expulsion and mass deportation. If a settlement is achieved, the Arabs would not, for example, oppose implementation of Resolution 242 in stages.

This is not a call for blind acceptance of the decision to deport some 400 Palestinians to southern Lebanon but it is a call that Resolution 799 should not be given priority over Resolution 242 which would end all these problems if implemented. In the past, some Arabs opposed any form of negotiations with Israel in the absence of a minimum balance that would guarantee a just solution. That was before the collapse of the Soviet Union, the disappearance of the Iraqi power and depth, and the fragmentation of the Arabs. The Arabs agreed to go to the Madrid conference on the basis of U.S. guarantees and assurances which perhaps compensated for that major imbalance of regional powers.

Categorical rejection of the implementation of Resolution 799 in stages, or in other words rejection of the implementation of the U.S.-Israeli agreement for the settlement of the deportees issue, could be seen as collision with the new U.S. Administration which has reaffirmed its full partnership in the negotiations. Only that partnership, with some amendment, can give the Arab negotiator the minimum required weight in the face of Israeli intransigence. If that administration

declared that it would not put any pressure on any of the parties to the negotiations, it would be futile to ask it to put pressure on Rabin's government for the repatriation of all the deportees en bloc before the resumption of the negotiations, particularly as it was the initiator of that agreement programming the repatriation of the deportees, which has been blessed by the Security Council.

Rabin has, as he said, fulfilled the deportation principle. The Arabs should not stop the negotiations for that would enable the Israeli prime minister to entrench and perpetuate that principle through mass deportations. He is in a hurry to get a settlement because he, above all, wants to maintain Israel's "purity" and keep it cleansed of the Arab ethnic element, or else that would be lost in the future with the Palestinians population multiplying at a much higher rate than the Jews. The Arabs should not allow the hardliners to negotiate for them by giving in to the call for "repatriation of the 400 deportees at once or no negotiations to determine the fate of 4 million people." Here, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat should perhaps prove that he, not Hamas, is the legitimate Palestinian decisionmaker.

'Bitter Fruits' Viewed

PM2402145093 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 22 Feb 93 p 11

[Editorial: "Bitter Fruits of Christopher's Tour"]

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher is continuing his tour of the Arab region with a view to urging the parties concerned with the bilateral negotiations to resume them and separate them from the issue of the deportees in southern Lebanon.

If we take the statements made openly by Christopher at his joint press conferences in Cairo, Amman, and Damascus as an indication of the extent of his tour's success or failure, it can be said that the U.S. secretary has made headway at the level of persuading the states he visited to change their positions and not to continue to make the deportees issue a major obstacle to the peace process.

The new thing Christopher is offering and which is helping the Arab states concerned to armed themselves with "flexibility" can be summed up in two basic points:

First, the United States is against the deportation and considers it illegal. Its acceptance of the incomplete implementation of Resolution 799 concerning the deportees' return does not mean that it will accept the same thing with regard to the implementation of the other resolutions, especially Resolutions 242 and 338. Thus it is exerting its efforts to speed up the deportees' return within the framework of the Israeli-U.S. agreement in this connection.

Second, the United States—represented by its new administration—will play the role of a "partner" in the bilateral negotiations and will intervene through this new role to extricate the negotiations from the deadlock they are currently experiencing.

If we examine these two points thoroughly, we will find that they mean some ostensible change in the U.S. handling of the future of the peace process, and that there is initial Arab acceptance of this change. However, it is difficult to bank on that: First, because the opinion of the Israeli Government, which Christopher has not visited yet, on all these matters is still unknown. Second, because of past experiences with U.S. Administrations and their failure to fulfill their pledges to the Arabs.

There are no guarantees that President Clinton's administration will compel Israel not to divide the implementation of Resolutions 242 and 338 if the Arabs agree to the precedent of dividing Resolution 799. President Bush's administration, which was described as the most closed to the Arabs, pledged that the period of the bilateral negotiations would not exceed one year, and that the transitional phase would be moved to within a year from the launch of the negotiations in order to transfer power to the Arabs of the occupied territories. But here we are entering the 15th month since the the Madrid conference and we are still at square one. And the situation is getting worse in the occupied Arab territories as a result of the Israeli policies of repression, deportation, and murder.

Furthermore, Washington's agreement to play the role of a partner in the bilateral negotiations could be a double-edged weapon. There is no guarantee that the new administration will not side with the Israeli view, which all indications suggest it is doing already. And the deportees question and the attempts to get round the Security Council resolution stipulating their return are the most marked indication in this connection.

The Clinton administration exposed its blatant bias toward the Israeli Government when it prevented the imposition of any sanctions against it in the UN Security Council. And here is Secretary of State Christopher touring the region to market this bias and put pressure on the Arabs to make concessions to resolve the deportees problem. All he is interested in is to save his government's face and that of the Israeli Government. As for the Arab governments' face, he is not interested in it. Perhaps because he is certain that some of these governments are also not interested in this matter.

Prospects of Success Considered

TA2402172893 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 24 Feb 93 pp 1, 7

[Editorial: "Removing the Obstacles—A Prelude to Resuming the Process"]

[Text] When the U.S. secretary of state began his tour, many observers expected that his trip would not lead to a breakthrough in the region's overcast climate, but as the end of his tour nears, it seems that he has succeeded in activating the peace process and bringing back the

parties to the negotiating table perhaps in a short time not to exceed one or two months. If the Arab parties have not declared publicly their consent to return to the negotiating table, none of those parties announced their refusal to do so and, rather, have insisted on moving forward in the peace process. Arab statements have ranged between the need not to delay the talks for long, and the need to return to the talks when the climate becomes more appropriate. These reservations stem from the Arabs' desire to end the crisis of the deportees who were expelled by Israel and who are still languishing under open skies in Lebanon. All the Arab leaders whom Christopher met expressed their concern over the issue of the deportees and stressed the need to return them to their homes in accordance with Security Council Resolution 799.

If the peace process enjoys the Arab leaders' obvious interest, no one can ignore the deportees' ordeal. As for the Palestinians, despite their firm desire to return to the talks, they find themselves in a very embarrassing situation. In addition to the deportee issue, there are the Israeli practices in the occupied territories, which have escalated recently whether in the growing number of deaths, demolition of homes, or detentions. This escalation by Israel makes it difficult for the negotiating delegation to return to the negotiations. It was proper of Secretary Christopher to raise these issues in his meeting with the Israeli leaders. Israel should reassess its policies toward the Palestinian people if it is sincere in its intentions to advance in the peace process and achieve settlements with the Palestinians. Israel and the Palestinian people have been destined to live side by side on this land. This requires building bridges of confidence and respect so that the two sides may overcome their fears and open a new page of neighborly relations. The occupation must end and the rights of the Palestinian people must be restored so that they can start developing their homeland.

These are the Palestinian people's aspirations and Christopher is called upon to comprehend them. Our people are neither terrorists nor bloodthirsty as some Israelis depict. They have a clear aim in the negotiations. This is summarized in implementing international legitimacy and commitment to its resolutions. That is the basis on which any serious inclination toward building a just and comprehensive peace in the region must be founded. We have no doubt that Christopher is convinced of this direct path, but he has to persuade the Israeli side of this inclination. If he succeeds in this, resumption of the talks will be easy and the U.S. Administration will be able to realize real achievements and break the deadlock in the peace process.

In all his statements during the current tour, Secretary Christopher has expressed optimism about his discussions with the leaders of the countries that he visited. This optimism, however, cannot be translated into practice unless Christopher manages to nudge Israel and exerts intensive efforts to convince Israeli leaders that the policy of violence and the era of breaking bones have ended forever and that the only way to achieve a settlement with the Palestinians is to convince them of the sincerity of Israel's intentions and its true inclination to abandon the idea of maintaining control over the Palestinian people and their land.

Secretary Christopher, who is concluding his tour and discussions with the Palestinians and the Israelis today, has not yet indicated whether he has succeeded in inducing the Israelis to modify their stance and accept to return the deportees quickly to their homes in accordance with Security Council Resolution 799. This complicated obstacle, which is hindering the resumption of negotiations, has remained. If the Palestinians are being pressured to moderate their position that rejects a return to the talks before this obstacle is overcome, the Palestinian reply to Christopher on the need to resume the negotiations was positive. However, the return of the Palestinian delegation to the talks hinges on the Israeli and U.S. response to the five-point memorandum explaining the Palestinian position on the negotiations. Will the parties concerned respond to these just demands and will a breakthrough be achieved? The answer to this question will come within the next few days.

Commentary Views Regional Tour

LD2402215493 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Station commentary]

[Excerpts] Brothers, the U.S. secretary of state can draw the conclusion that the main aim behind his Middle East tour has almost been realized. This is perhaps the gist of the statements he has made in the last 48 hours in most of the region's capitals. In his statements he said that the political leaders in the Arab capitals he visited were unanimous in their intention to resume the peace talks as soon as possible.

The word possible which has been included in the statements of the Arab leaders concerned when they used the phrase as soon as possible to Warren Christopher this phrase in itself contains conditions and provisos which must be met quickly before the talks could be resumed. The question here is: When is resumption of the negotiations going to be possible?

There is no argument about the fact that the Arab sides has chosen peace as a strategic objective which is difficult to go back on it and hence, the resumption of the peace negotiations is the normal thing to do. To suspend them would involve an extraordinary situation. One must strive to remove its causes. The U.S. secretary of state must have been made aware of this view in the Arab countries he had visited. [passage omitted]

The deportation led to showing up the Israeli attitude, namely ignoring the UN Security Council resolutions. This cast shadow on all the negotiating possibilities. It placed the credibility of the United States and Israel's intentions toward peace under the test. The result was

this: Not one Arab side expects a complete Israeli implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions. It will not also expect U.S. pressure on Israel to implement those resolutions.

What then is behind the U.S. secretary of state's insistence that the negotiations must be resumed when the negotiations have now become an aim and not a means as they had been in the past. Only the new U.S. Administration and Israel have the answer to this.

'Wall' in Peace Process Viewed

LD2402224893 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher urged during his meetings with Israeli officials that a breakthrough be made toward the peace process. It is clear that while this call was made, a wall was erected in front of this process. Who has erected this wall and who is being asked to provide the chance to breach it, demolish it, or remove it altogether?

The government of Yitzhaq Rabin—the one that has turned all its peace slogans upside down since taking over power in Israel about nine months ago—is the one that has built this wall. It is now seeking the blessing of the U.S. stance, which always comes to its rescue.

The observer is driven most earnestly to ask about the chances of breaching this wall, especially when Mr. Christopher appears to be carrying nothing that shows the least pressure to bear on the Israeli government. On the contrary, he has been directing his pressures on the Arab governments concerned and on our Palestinian side in particular, i.e. he too has turned the matter upside down through his clear agreement with the Israeli stand.

Despite this, and in view of the fact that we very much want the continuation of the peace process, we would also like to see full U.S. participation in this process. This participation should be based on a reasonable balance between its sides. We believe that the U.S. secretary of state should pay attention to the five points contained in the Palestinian memorandum. He should take care of them and endeavor to apply them as a way toward this balance which we demand and which we would like to see in U.S. policy and in the full participation of the U.S. role in the peace process.

The conclusion that can be drawn from all this is: The U.S. and Israeli sides are equally called upon to breach the wall which they have both erected in front of the way to peace.

'Sources' Say Jerusalem Added to Multilateral Agenda

TA2402140793 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 24 Feb 93 pp 1, 12

[By special AL-QUDS correspondent]

[Excerpt] Cairo—Informed Egyptian sources have said that U.S.-Russian contacts will soon get under way to reach agreement on forming a special committee that will discuss the future of Jerusalem within the framework of the multilateral talks committees. The sources disclosed the existence of an Egyptian-U.S. agreement stipulating that Jerusalem be subject to direct negotiations between the Arab parties and Israel. The sources noted that the time for announcing the formation of the committee will be determined at the conclusion of Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour of the Middle East region and in light of the Arab working papers presented to him.

The sources explained that the proposed Jerusalem committee will basically include Palestinian, Jordanian, and Egyptian parties. The sources considered that Washington's consent to incorporate Jerusalem into the circle of negotiations reflects the new U.S. Administration's intention to gain the confidence of the Arab parties that America would continue to play the role of an even-handed and unbiased mediator in the peace talks. Moreover, this would constitute a new winning card for encouraging the Arab and Palestinian parties to resume the peace talks. [passage omitted]

Habash 'Tightens Control' on PFLP

PM2402114693 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 21 Feb 93 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Popular Front Fifth Congress Confirms Habash Control; Rehabilitation of Wadi' Haddad and 'Behind Enemy Everywhere' Slogan"]

[Text] London—Well-informed Palestinian sources said yesterday that the congress which the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] held in Damascus last week ended with PFLP Secretary General Dr. George Habash tightening his control on the organization and imposing a hardline policy on it, as though he wants to end his political life with a return to the roots from which his Front was launched.

The sources noted that the congress results can be summed up as follows:

1. Rehabilitation of Dr. Wadi' Haddad, the official who was in charge of foreign operations, including hijacking planes—the operations which secured a world reputation for the Front. A clear decision was reached in this connection, as Wadi' Haddad and his group were dismissed from the Front in 1976 by a decision from Habash himself. Haddad died at a Berlin hospital in 1978 from a chronic disease which he contracted during his stay in Baghdad.

2. A return to the "behind the enemy everywhere" slogan, which could mean—although this is not certain—the possibility of a resumption of the foreign operations, which were stopped on orders from the "doctor," who fought a battle within the regime for this purpose.

3. The assertion that the Jordanian scene constitutes a "base of support" for the occupied land—which means focusing once again on exerting efforts to secure influence for the Front in Jordan. It is not known whether the ultimate aim is to establish armed bases in Jordan or to reactivate operations across the river. This is with the knowledge that such a move is bound to face many difficulties in view of the Jordanian Army's control of the cease-fire line with Israel.

In this context Palestinian sources revealed that the congress witnessed a sharp debate between Habash and Assistant Secretary General Mustafa al-Zibri, known as "Abu-'Ali Mustafa," regarding frontal action [al-'amal al-jabhawi] in Jordan. The debate was settled in favor of Habash, who urged that the Front organize Palestinians in Jordan directly, not via a Jordanian party which could become a rival to it in that country. The atmosphere immediately became tense in the congress and Abu-'Ali Mustafa was clearly agitated.

During the congress—the first since the fourth congress was held in Beirut in 1981—Bassam Abu-Sharif's dismissal was approved. He was a member of the Front's Political Bureau until 1987 and was dismissed because he "shook hands" with President Husni Mubarak at the African summit held in Addis Ababa. Abu-Sharif was among the delegation accompanying Yasir 'Arafat to that summit. Mahmud Hantash's dismissal was also approved. He was chief of staff of the Front's forces.

The congress was held under the slogan of "renewal"—the renewal called for by Dr. Habash, who believes in "distinction" [al-tamayuz]—in order to find a justification for the organization's existence. On that basis, he asked a number of old leaders not to run for major positions. Deliberations were conducted secretly among some leaders regarding the new leadership. As a result, Salah Salah, an old member of the Political Bureau, did not nominate himself. He had been a PLO Executive Committee member for a long time. But Abu-Nidal Musallami, Political Bureau member responsible for the occupied territories, insisted on running for Central Committee member. The outcome was that he failed in the two-round ballot. As for Ahmad al-Yamani (Abu-Mahir), a founding member of the Front who secluded himself two years ago, he refused to nominate himself. 'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh was able to retain his post as Central Committee member by just one vote, whereas Mrs. Samira, Salah Salah's wife, failed. Among those who won the ballot were Husayn Abu-al-Naml, Khalid Abu-al-Nasr, Abu-'Ali Suwaydan, "Abu-Rabi'" (military), Marwan 'Abd-al-'Al, and 'Umar Qutaysh.

Commenting on what happened at the the PFLP fifth congress, Palestinian sources said the hardline wing achieved a sweeping victory, that Dr. Habash showed that he is still the unchallenged leader in the Front, that he has no rival at present, despite his health, and that the young generation, on which the Front's leadership counted, is completely loyal to him.

In this context it was noteworthy during the congress that when Mahir al-Tahir, the "doctor's" secretary, delivered Habash's speech, one participant objected and said that the speech should be delivered by the assistant secretary general if the secretary general did not wish to speak. Habash replied that "there is no such thing as assistant secretary general when the secretary general is present."

In Damascus (AFP), Habash yesterday said that the PLO must refuse to continue negotiations with Israel until the deportees issue is settled.

At a news conference in Damascus he added that the PLO would be making a serious mistake if it adopted a different position.

He demanded the "immediate implementation" of Security Council Resolution 799. Habash reemphasized his opposition to the peace process which began with the Madrid conference, saying that this process ignores the international resolutions concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict, stipulating the need to grant the Palestinians the right to self-determination.

Fatah Said Seeking To Curb Expenditure

PM2502112793 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 23 Feb 93 p 1

[Unattributed "exclusive" report: "Fatah Forms Austerity Committee and Begins Cutting Expenditures of Senior Officials"]

[Text] Tunis—Palestinian sources in Tunis have told AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI that, at its latest meeting, Fatah's Central Committee decided to form a committee to introduce austerity measures, set an expenditure ceiling, and meet the requirements of the next phase.

The sources said that, because of the discontinuation of Arab aid, Fatah would try, as much as possible, to rely on its own resources and cut expenditure. The committee consists of Central Committee Members Abu-'Ala', Hakam Bal'awi, Subhi Abu-Karsh (Abu-al-Mundhir), and 'Abdallah al-Ifranji.

One of the committee members said that it was agreed in principle to reduce the Central Committee members' allocations and allowances so as to set an example for lower ranks.

Meanwhile, PLO offices abroad have been making expenditure cuts since the beginning of this year. The Palestinian embassy in Saudi Arabia has cut the salaries of its staff by 20 percent from the ambassador down to the most junior employee.

Algeria

Prime Minister Pays Visit to France 18 Feb

WA2403154393

For reportage on the visit by Prime Minister Abdessalam to France, including reports on his talks with Prime Minister Beregovoy, Finance Minister Balladur, and President Mitterrand, please see the FRANCE section of the 23 February West Europe DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Gendarmerie Communique on Arrest of Terrorists

LD2302213793 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 23 Feb 93

[Excerpt] According to a National Gendarmerie Command communique, security forces in Algiers arrested two of three terrorists involved in an attack on 17 January, in Diar Es Saada district, in which a police inspector was wounded. The same source said that the search is still underway for Bachir Lakhel who masterminded the attack and who is still on the run.

In Chlef governorate, security forces reported that four unknown and armed elements robbed a jeweller's shop in Chettaia in Chlef governorate and managed to get away with 250 million centimes' worth of jewelry. [passage omitted]

Security Situation Updated

LD2502001393 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2300 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] The Algerian News Agency—APS—has reported that more than 90 detainees at Sa'id 'Utba security center in Ouargla stood trial before the the military court there the day before yesterday.

After a 48 hour hunger strike the detainees had on 18 February set fire to a number of amenities at the security center, assaulted the guards of the center, and attempted to break into an arms storeroom. The confrontation left 10 injured among the guards of the security center, however, the forces of the national security and gendarmerie intervened and controlled the situation after arresting those who caused the confrontations and brought them to justice.

Staying with the security matters it was learned today from the provincial security of Boumerdes that the security men were able, this week, to eliminate one of the terrorists who took part in carrying out criminal operations recently in Khemis el Khechna. On the other hand, the security services of Boumerdes Province were able, during this week, to arrest a gang consisting of nine terrorists at Kheroua and Boumerdes while in possession of a number of home-made grenades. The gang was brought to justice and its members were placed under preventive imprisonment.

'Important' Oil Discovery in El Merk Region

LD2402103993 Algiers APS in English 1016 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Algiers, Feb 24 (APS)—An "important" discovery of petroleum has been realized by the companies Anadarko-Algeria (U.S.) and Sonatrach in the area of El Merk (1100 kms south-east of Algiers), the national hydrocarbon company, Sonatrach announced Tuesday [23 February].

The drilling of the well called El Merk situated in the Great Algerian Eastern Erg, started on 15 November 1992 and reached the depth of 3,750 meters.

The trials made show important quantities of oil and gas.

The U.S. company Anadarko and its two partners Lasmo Oil Ltd. of Great Britain and Maerks Olie A.S from Denmark operate in virtue of the research contract signed with Sonatrach in October 1989.

This company has thus discovered its first well after three and a half years of exploration whereas the contract signed with Sonatrach provides for a ten year research [word indistinct].

This discovery, after the ones made since 1990 by Sonatrach and its partners Agip from Italy, BHP from Australia and Cersa from Spain "confirms the Eastern Erg as a province with high oil potential", Sonatrach underlined.

It is worth recalling that since the promulgation of the law on hydrocarbons, in August 1986, it is the 4th foreign oil company in association with Sonatrach which discovers oil in Algeria.

Project To Exploit Liquified Gas Reported

LD2502103193 Algiers APS in Arabic 0900 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Excerpts] Algiers, 25 Feb (APS)—Mr. Faied, assistant director general of Sonatrach, has stated that the expected total production from Algerian oil fields that have been discovered but not yet exploited amounts to 80 million tonnes worth of liquified gas and 250 billion cubic meters of gas.

Mr. Faied clarified to L'ECONOMIE magazine the importance of this project, investment in which has reached a value of 5 billion Algerian dinars, 60 percent in hard currency, and which will require resorting to partnerships in the framework of pre-sold contracts for liquified gas.

The assistant director general of Sonatrach confirmed that with the exception of the large fields at Hassi Rmel, the other gas fields will be exploited through partnerships. He pointed out, on the other hand, that the aim is to preserve for the long term the current production of liquified hydrocarbons at the rate of 60 million tonnes a year. [passage omitted]

As a reminder, Algeria's confirmed gas reserves have reached 3 trillion cubic meters.

Egypt

Diplomats To Leave for Iraq; Envoy Visit Delayed

NC2402151393 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1357 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 24 Feb (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—A diplomatic delegation headed by a minister plenipotentiary will leave Cairo for Baghdad next week to run Egyptian Embassy business in Baghdad and coordinate liaison between the two countries. Informed sources have revealed that Cairo received an important report demonstrating the need for a permanent Egyptian diplomatic presence in Baghdad to settle certain issues relating to Egyptian workers there. This is the first official delegation to visit Baghdad since the Gulf war. Contacts took place between Egypt and Iraq in the past few days and Cairo asked to postpone direct contacts for some time. Accordingly, a visit by President Saddam Husayn's personal envoy has been postponed.

Al-Baz, 'Arafat View Peace Talks, Deportees

NC2402180693 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1654 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 24 Feb (MENA)—Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat stopped over at Cairo Airport en route from Khartoum this afternoon.

Arriving, he reiterated his thanks to President Husni Mubarak and the Egyptian Government for their kind efforts to end the deportees' problem and facilitate the peace negotiations.

'Arafat added: It is well known that the Egyptian Government made tremendous efforts on this, through President Husni Mubarak, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, and other officials. Regrettably, Israel continues its intransigence and insists on maintaining the problem even after U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit to Israel.

'Arafat went on: Rabin remains obstinate, although the offers made through the Egyptians were better than those made by the Americans or through American-Israeli agreement.

'Arafat said Israel must implement Security Council Resolution 799, because collective deportations constitute a war crime and violate the Fourth Geneva Convention, the UN Charter, and the numerous Security Council resolutions.

He said former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir (complied with) [words indistinct] Resolution 276 not to deport 12 Palestinians, but Rabin maintains an intransigent position, defying previous resolutions and deporting 400 people.

'Arafat asked: What is the impact on the peace process? Rabin, he said, throws decisions in our face to make things impossible for the Palestinian negotiator. 'Arafat stressed that no party to the negotiations has the right to take any measure that may disturb the talks.

He said we still demand that the cosponsors of the peace talks do not remain spectators to the problem. We ask Russia and the United States to work as active partners, not as mere observers to the peace process, and we hope that Christopher will convince Rabin to remove the obstacles.

On proposals for the deportees to return in stages, 'Arafat said the principle of deportation is unacceptable. If Israel fails to abolish the principle, it will continue to brandish it as a sword against the Palestinian negotiator. As long as Israel has American assurances and guarantees that the other sides cannot punish it at the Security Council, it will continue to do whatever it likes, 'Arafat said.

On reports of a possible meeting between Christopher and Kozyrev to extend the invitation to resume the peace talks, 'Arafat said: I am for the resumption of the talks, but I demand first that the obstacles be removed from the Palestinian delegation's path so that it can attend.

Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, received 'Arafat at the airport. Al-Baz and 'Arafat discussed Christopher's current tour of the region and the results of his talks in Egypt and other Arab countries.

Al-Baz said our aim is to resume the Arab-Israeli talks and advance toward peace. For this to be achieved, he said, Israel must remove the obstacle of the deportees, because negotiations cannot proceed under the shadow of a continuing deportation policy.

Al-Baz said this would disturb the necessary climate for the talks. The minimum we expect from Israel, he added, is to take measures to build confidence and improve the atmosphere so that the Palestinian people under occupation can feel more optimistic and more confident about the peace process.

He stressed that the deportations only make things worse and that the action may be repeated, which disturbs the conditions necessary for fruitful negotiations.

Dr. al-Baz said we are confident this problem will be solved and removed from the path of the talks.

He said all parties are seriously committed to cooperation to end the conflict peacefully.

We stress again, al-Baz said, that the Palestine question is the essence of the problem and must be addressed sensitively if the Arab-Israeli conflict, with its negative implications, is not to continue. We are looking optimistically toward the future; this obstacle will be cleared and the negotiations will soon resume, al-Baz said.

After a stopover of about one hour, 'Arafat left Cairo Airport for Amman.

He was also received and seen off by Palestinian Ambassador in Cairo Sa'id Kamal and some members of the Palestinian Embassy.

Sudanese Sources Say No Progress in Hala'ib Talks

NC2402150693 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1350 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 24 Feb (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—Informed sources in Khartoum say that no progress was made at the joint Egyptian- Sudanese Committee meetings. The sources say there are difficulties facing the meetings and that if things continue this way, the committee is likely to fail in its task. The weekly Sudanese magazine AL-MASIRAH expressed doubt about the success of the official Egyptian delegation's talks on the Hala'ib issue. Sudanese television did not mention the arrival of the Egyptian delegation or the meetings of the joint committee. Yesterday's edition of the newspaper AL-SUDAN AL-HADITHAH did not report on the joint committee meetings or on the arrival of the Egyptian delegation.

Cabinet Discusses Christopher Visit, Other Issues

NC2502121093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1130 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Excerpt] Cairo, 25 Feb (MENA)—At its meeting yesterday evening that lasted late into the night, the Cabinet, presided over by Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi, listened to a report by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa on various foreign issues, Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif said today. The report touched on the Egyptian-Sudanese Joint Committee meeting in Khartoum and the results of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's Middle East tour and his talks with President Husni Mubarak on the deportees issue and its effects on the peace talks, emphasizing the need for positive measures to secure the deportees' return. The report noted that the talks dealt with Egyptian-U.S. relations and U.S. President Bill Clinton's invitation to President Mubarak to visit the United States in spring.

The information minister said the foreign minister's report also reviewed the situation in Somalia, the struggle among the various Somali factions, ongoing efforts to reconcile them, and Egypt's participation in the reconciliation conference scheduled to be held in Addis Ababa in the middle of March.

On Bosnia-Hercegovina, the report stressed that Egypt is against the ethnic cleansing policy pursued by the Serbs. Egypt is acting in coordination with the international community to condemn and to bring to trial those responsible for the cleansing through the UN and in accordance with the Security Council's recent resolution on this, the report explained.

Al-Sharif said the Cabinet discussed the Damascus Declaration in light of the postponement of the meeting of member states' economy ministers scheduled in Doha. The discussion involved an assessment of the stance of the countries that signed the declaration's economic and security sections.

On law number 100 in 1993, providing democratic guarantees for professional associations and trade unions, the Cabinet said there was a need to respect the law passed by the People's Assembly, which seeks to consolidate democracy and respect the majority's right to choose its representatives in accordance with the law. Dr. Sidqi said he was confident that everybody will want to respect legitimacy and comply with the law. [passage omitted]

Lawyers, Engineers Strike To Protest New Law

NC2502091593 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 21 Feb 93 p 1

[Report by Majdi Hilmi]

[Excerpts] Lawyers and engineers are organizing a strike today to protest against the unified Professional Associations Law. More than 100,000 lawyers will express their dissatisfaction with the law by not attending court sessions. This will demonstrate their disapproval of the government's and People's Assembly's disregard for them when the law was discussed. [passage omitted]

In addition, 190,000 engineers will go on strike today from 1200 to 1400. [passage omitted]

Afghan Envoy Discusses Wanted Egyptian Mujahidin

NC2402190793 Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 22 Feb 93 p 18

[Report by 'Abdallah Kamal—ellipses as published]

[Text] Afghan Ambassador in Cairo Mohammad Sadeq Saljuqi has said that the extradition of those wanted by the Egyptian Interior Ministry on terrorism charges is governed by agreements on the extradition of criminals, which do not exist between Egypt and Afghanistan.

The ambassador was answering a question by ROSE AL-YUSUF, which showed him a list of Egyptians wanted for execution following a court ruling on the "Afghan case." He said: I discussed the issue with the Egyptian interior minister during our latest meeting and I denied that Afghanistan supports terrorism.

The ambassador added: "We received the Arabs as mujahidin seeking God's reward... and we never knew they belonged to international organizations or anything like that."

In a dialogue translated by Afghan Embassy First Secretary Fadlallah, Ambassador Saljuqi said: "I lived 10 years in the mujahidin camps. I did not meet the Arabs

often... Their work was largely symbolic. The Afghans liberated Afghanistan... but this does not deny the presence of mujahidin from the Arab world, Asia, or even Europe."

The Afghan ambassador said the Arabs in Afghanistan should now abandon their rifles and help to rebuild the country. "Otherwise, they should leave."

An Arab magazine has reported that the Arabs in Afghanistan are discussing some formulas to stay in Afghanistan or Pakistan so that they don't have to return to their countries, where they are wanted on terrorism charges.

One formula is to play what they call a "jihad" role in the expected struggle in Tajikistan. The Afghan ambassador denied any knowledge of this.

Security Agencies Foil 47 'Infiltration' Attempts

NC2502065393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2125 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 24 Feb (MENA)—Interior Minister 'Abd-al-Halim Musa has announced that security agencies have foiled 47 infiltration attempts across our borders.

In an interview with AL-JUMHURIYAH to be published tomorrow, Musa affirmed that there are no open cases, because the suspects involved in all the uncovered cases and the evidence substantiating the accusations have been referred to the judiciary.

He said that the number of suspects who have escaped is very small compared to the number of cases. Only four terrorists have escaped out of a total of 34 cases, he said.

Musa stressed that the new Professional Associations Law will be enforced and that anyone who violates it will be punished in accordance with the penal code.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Conducts Field Tours to Work Sites

LD2502102993 Tripoli JANA in English 0841 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Tripoli, An Nawar [February] 25 (Jamahariya News Agency)—Within the pattern of his continued instigative role towards the exploitation of all human and material resources and the intensification of work and effort for the build-up of progress and life on the Arab-Libyan land, the leader of the revolution [Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi] continued his field tours to monitor the current construction works of development schemes and the projects of strategic transformation.

During the last two days the leader's tour included a number of sites of the accomplished phases in the course of the great man made river project.

The leader of the revolution personally stood upon the work being carried out at the 100 metre long experimental tunnel, which was constructed in the east of the city of Tarhuna. He witnessed what was accomplished by the Arab-Libyan engineers, who are involved in the first scientific experiments in the field of tunnel engineering design and construction, which is the vital part required for the second phase of the great man-made river project and the remaining phases through which the river courses will pass through a mountain range. This requires the digging of long tunnels, some more than 15 kilometres in length.

This work by Arab-Libyan engineers comes within the directive of giving an impetus to Arab-Libyan human elements and national corporations in the execution of the remaining phases of the great man-made river project. This requires the training of such elements as engineers and technicians to carry out and execute the engineering designs of tunnels and the use of complicated equipment and technological instruments needed.

Morocco

Cabinet Views EC Relations, Toxic Waste Issue

LD2402220793 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 2030 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Excerpts] A Council of Government was held today under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Mohamed Karim Lambrani. At the start of the proceedings, the cabinet listened to a report by Abdellatif Filali, minister of state for foreign affairs and cooperation, on Morocco's relations with the EC. In the report, Filali pointed to the progress achieved in the talks on cooperation between Morocco and the EC within the framework of laying down the structures of the new economic partnership. [passage omitted]

At the end of the meeting, the cabinet examined the Bale agreement on the control of the movement of toxic waste across borders and their disposal. This agreement, adopted by the conference of delegates held in Bale, Switzerland, on 22 March 1989, stressed the need to reduce the transport of waste and bring it down to a level where it is possible to handle it efficiently and safely and reduce its volume and toxicity. The agreement also calls for helping the developing countries to handle the dangerous waste safely. This agreement constitutes the only suitable framework for bolstering international cooperation in order to improve and achieve a safe handling of all waste by defining the terms of its exportation and importation since it poses a threat to people's health and the environment.

UN Delegate Says New Sahara Resolution Needed

LD2402134793 Rabat MAP in English 1251 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Rabat, Feb 24 (MAP)—Morocco's permanent delegate to the UN Ahmed Senoussi said the best means to close the Sahara issue is to adopt a new resolution calling for the implmentation of other resolutions on the Sahara, ie resolutions 658-690 and 725.

In an interview with London-based Arabic weekly AL YAQADA, the Moroccan diplomat said the resolutions define the UN peace plan and its implementation mechanisms [word indistinct] as the criteria to identify those entitled to vote in the referendum.

Senoussi lauded the UN secretary general's efforts to find a solution to the Sahara problem and voiced hope the Security Council will adopt a single standard in the implementation of resolutions.

He also told AL YAQADA as many as 30,000 Moroccans are forcibly held by the Polisario in camps in the region of Tindouf.

Amnesty on Human Rights Violations by Polisario

LD2402133993 Rabat MAP in English 1234 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] London, Feb. 24 (MAP)—The London-based Amnesty International voiced concern over the human rights violation perpetrated by the "Polisario" [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro] in the sequestration camps of Tindouf. In a five-page report published Tuesday, Amnesty underlined that the "Polisario" has imprisoned, tortured and killed many persons who are accused of opposing the theses of the separatists in the Tindouf camps. The international organization requested the Polisario to put an end to such practices and abuses.

Sudan

Al-Bashir Hails Uganda Talks With SPLA

EA2502142793 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1315 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council and of the Council of Ministers, has said that the meeting which took place in Uganda between the government delegation and John Garang is regarded as important and a good sign on the road to peace. It is the first time that Garang has agreed to sit down with the government delegation.

The comments came at a regular meeting between the chairman and leaders of the mass media. Lt. Gen. al-Bashir affirmed that all the people in Sudan want peace, pointing out that all the efforts previously made with the rebel movement through African leaderships, had paved the way for this meeting.

SPLA High Command Dissolved; Other Changes

AB2402221693 Paris AFP in English 2121 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Kampala, Feb 24 (AFP)—Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) leader John Garang replaced the rebel group's political- military high command on Wednesday [24 February] with a general council to run it until a pro-democracy convention in May.

Addressing a press conference here, Colonel Garang said that the SPLA's political-military high command, the movement's top political organ, was being dissolved to pave way for what he termed as the "restructuring of the movement to make it democratic."

Garang was speaking at the end of two days of talks with a Sudanese government delegation led by Planning Minister 'Ali al-Haj Mohamed under the chairmanship of Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni.

During the talks, Garang, who heads the Torit faction of the movement, agreed to resume peace talks in the Nigerian capital Abuja at a date yet to be announced.

The first round of the Abuja talks in May last year failed to resolve the conflict because the government ruled out SPLA demands for either a new secular constitution for a united Sudan or for a referendum on self-determination for southern Sudan.

The next round is expected to be further complicated by the entry of a rival faction led by Garang's former Deputy William Nyuon Bany, who represented him in the first round of talks, but who deserted him with a host of other senior officials of the movement late last year.

The SPLA has been battling Khartoum forces since 1983 to end domination of the Christian and animist south by the Islamic Arabised north.

Garang said that all powers and functions of the dissolved high command had now been transferred to a 61-member General Field and Staff Command Council until a national convention of the movement to be convened before May 16.

He said the committee organising the convention would be chaired by Commander James Igga Wani.

Garang did not, however, indicate whether the Nasir faction led by Commanders Riak Machar and Lam Akol, which broke away from his mainstream movement in August 1991 after accusing him of dictatorship, would be invited to participate in the national convention.

He also told journalists that the Khartoum government had launched a dry-season offensive in the south, but declined to give details.

"As far as I am concerned, fighting is going on in the south and, like in the previous offensives, this one too will come to nothing", he said.

He appealed to the regime of General 'Umar Hassan al-Bashir in Khartoum to hold urgent talks with his movement under U.N. auspices to demilitarize some areas in the south to prevent what he called a major catastrophe.

Ethiopia Reportedly Supporting Government

NC2502093093 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 21 Feb 93 p 9

[Text] AKHIR AL-ANBA' news bulletin, issued by the [Sudanese opposition] Ummah Party in Cairo, has said that Sudan's military government has reached an agreement with the Ethiopian Government allowing it to use an Ethiopian military base to strike those who oppose it in southern Sudan.

The bulletin added that the Sudanese Government received shipments of Soviet [as published] T-54 and T-55 tanks from Ethiopia in return for Sudanese shipments of food.

Army Seeks Limits on Islamic Front 'Interference'

NC2402154293 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1356 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Cairo, 24 Feb (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—Sudanese Army sources say junior officers are feeling very resentful, grumbling about the Islamic Front's plan to replace officers with popular defense cadres and about a considerable shortage of arms and ammunition recently. The sources stressed that these officers are considering action to limit the Islamic Front's interference in Sudanese Army affairs and demanding that a new government be formed comprising figures who are not linked with the opposition parties or the Islamic Front.

PLO's 'Arafat Arrives in Khartoum 23 Feb

EA2402163693 Khartoum SUNA in English 0930 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Excerpt] Khartoum, 24 Feb (SUNA)—The Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat arrived here Tuesday [23 February] evening within his tours to the Arab countries aiming at discussing the recent developments in the Arab arena.

'Arafat was received at Khartoum Airport by the chairman of the Revolution Command Council (RCC), Gen 'Umar al-Bashir, secretary- general, minister of interior, Brig 'Abd-al-Rahim Muhammad Husayn, besides members of the Palestinian Embassy here. [passage omitted]

'Arafat Departs

EA2402205093 Khartoum SUNA in English 0930 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Excerpt] Khartoum, 24 Feb (SUNA)—The Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat left here Wednesday [24 February] after a one-day visit to the country.

In a departure statement President 'Arafat said he had briefed the Revolution Command Council (RCC) Chairman Gen. 'Umar [al- Bashir] on the outcome of the recent meeting in Quds [Jerusalem] between the American secretary of state and the Palestinian delegation to peace talks.

'Arafat further said he had also briefed Gen. al-Bashir on the importance of implementing the U.N. Security Council's resolution 799, besides the current development in the occupied territory and the intifada. [passage omitted]

Tunisia

Economic Cooperation Talks Held With Belgium

LD2302204593 Tunis Tunis-7 Television in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 Feb 93

[Text] Proceedings of the sixth session of the Tunisian-Belgian joint committee have been held over the last two days under the chairmanship of Tunisian National Ecomonomy Minister Sadok Rabah and the Belgian minister of foreign trade and European affairs.

At the end of the session, the two sides set an agenda for the exchange of visits and business missions in order to establish continuous contact between the two countries' economic entrepreneurs. With the aim of giving impetus to bilateral economic relations, the two sides agreed to encourage cooperation between their regions as a first step in order to set up partnership operations by virtue of allocating adequate funding and organizing promotional campaigns in both countries.

The committee noted with satisfaction a positive development in the number of Tunisian-Belgian companies based in Tunisia.

New Radio Station in Tataouine Planned

LD2302190393 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 23 Feb 93

[Text] Within the framework of the consolidation of the regional radio network in the country for the important role it is playing in support of the development efforts and the cultural, informational, and entertainment activities in the regions, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali has decided to create a radio station in Tataouine to cover the southern part of Tunisia. This took place

during the meeting this morning at Carthage Palace between the president and Communications Minister Habib Lazreg, who reported to the president on the activities of the ministry and submitted to him the study he had been instructed to carry out regarding the project of the Radio of the Tunisian South. President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali gave his instructions for this project to be completed before the end of the year.

Kuwait

Envoy Says Iraq Holding 850 as 'Bargaining Chip'

NC2402165693 Paris AFP in English 1600 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Feb 24 (AFP)—Kuwait accused Iraq on Wednesday of holding hundreds of prisoners of war as a bargaining chip to circumvent full implementation of United Nations Gulf war ceasefire resolutions.

Kuwaiti Ambassador in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Ibrahim 'Abdallah al-Mansur, said Baghdad was still holding about 850 POWs in violation of Security Council resolutions since the end of the Gulf war in February 1991.

He said Iraq was lying when it denied holding any prisoners. Most of these are Kuwaitis while the rest are from the Gulf states of Saudi Arabia, Oman, UAE, as well as Egypt and Syria, he said.

"It has become clear that Iraq's intransigence in releasing those innocent people is because it wants to keep them as a bargaining chip to achieve demands that do not conform to international resolutions related to its aggression on Kuwait," al-Mansur told AFP.

He spoke at an open-air ceremony here marking the second anniversary of the liberation of Kuwait from seven months of Iraqi occupation. Hundreds of yellow balloons were released in solidarity with the POWs.

"This issue is a human problem in the first place," al-Mansur said, appealing for international support for the release of the prisoners. "We reaffirm that most of those prisoners are civilians from Kuwait and Arab and friendly countries."

Oman

Brazilian Defense Ministry Official Arrives

JN2102165593 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1435 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Text] Muscat, 21 Feb (WAKH)—General Luis Bafia, chief of the Military Equipment Service [name and title as received] of the Brazilian Defense Ministry, arrived in Muscat this afternoon, at the head of a Brazilian military team, on a visit to the Sultanate of Oman.

The Brazilian official will hold talks with Omani officials about bilateral cooperation, especially in the area of defense.

Saudi Arabia

Christopher Trip Viewed in Terms of U.S. Interests

PM2502100493 Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic 19 Feb 93 pp 1, 22

[Editorial: "Christopher Between Israeli Optimism and Arab Doubts!"]

[Text] We know that the U.S. secretary of state's visit to the region will be a hot one in terms of the escalation of existing events. We also know that he does not want the wheel of peace to be linked to the developments which Israel initiated with the deportation of over 400 Palestinians. It regarded the issue as finished despite the resolution which rejects and condemns this action.

What we are interested in is that the new secretary—new to the United States and to conditions in the region—and the conditions he is going to face will produce a position stemming primarily from U.S. interests. This is because the region's issues—even if U.S. political leaderships are changed—remain understood and clear. Whereas assessments alone can operate through positive and negative methods... [sentence as published]

The United States is currently pursuing a policy of clear austerity in order to reduce its economic deficit, pay its debts, and compete with Germany and Japan to attain economic levels that match its world role as a superpower. On the basis of the position announced by President Clinton, the Middle East problem remains a challenge, for strategic reasons which the United States is not unaware of or wants to overcome through negative methods. Perhaps the criterion of this interest is the principle that it is only Israel that is exhausting U.S. aid. This is because, even if we assume that there is an Arab party benefitting from U.S. aid, the revenues of economic interests with the Arabs, and the gains it is reaping exceed thousands of times what Israel offers it. We are not trying here to complicate the difficult equations or apply the old conclusions that Israel is militarily and ideologically more important than the Arabs. Because these ideas ended with the end of their circumstances and reasons...

The U.S. secretary is currently in the region, and the Arabs say that they cannot sit at the peace table before the deportees problem is solved and before the point from which the peace process should proceed is determined.

And Israel is blatantly refusing to return the deportees. Nor is it offering a specific principle for peace to help reach agreement on the points of disagreement and the points of agreement. So the U.S. secretary of state is faced with two problems which make an imminent solution remote. And the United States is the only partner capable of dealing with this matter in a spirit of

responsibility, that is, assuming it is going to view matters in the region clearly and without any barriers or prior convictions.

This is because the situation is not moving in the right direction. As Israel has been able to obstruct the Security Council resolution, fool the international community by dividing the deportees issue, and then demand that the Arabs be pressured into sitting at the negotiating table, these erroneous actions can only be corrected by a clear position from the United States, so that the other issues can be facilitated on the basis of the logic of rights and the facts, not procrastination and the intention to harm the Palestinian people by all the means rejected by international legitimacy.

While we realize that the U.S. secretary of state still deals with the region's problems by the probe policy, we do not expect imminent results. However, we hope that the crises will not escalate and reach points that are difficult to control or be subjected to erroneous calculations, or calculations that are unacceptable at least to the Arabs....

Paper Skeptical of U.S. Airdrop Plan for Bosnia

LD2502105493 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0620 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Riyadh, 25 Feb (SPA)—In their leading editorials today, Saudi newspapers deal with a number of current domestic, Arab, and international issues.

AL-MADINAH deals with the U.S. decision to air-drop relief aid on Bosnia-Hercegovina. The newspaper considers this decision a positive step but not a solution to the problem. The newspaper said that although the Serbs' rejection of the plan was expected and understandable, especially in the framework of what they have been carrying out in practices and violations witnessed by the world, which is unanimous that those responsible be brought to account, the contradiction in their leader's statements is causing confusion. The Serb leader is reported as vowing "to guarantee" the safety of the planes taking part in the operation, stressing at the same time his disapproval of the whole project.

The newspaper describes the U.S. operation as a kind of local anesthetic for a major tragedy which requires a healing treatment, namely taking steps to deter the Serb aggressor, and implementing the international resolutions passed against them, including trying war criminals for human rights violations. The newspaper calls for the issue of arming Bosnia to be considered, because this is the best option, given that circumstances have proved objectively that being easy on the Serbs will ultimately lead only to their swallowing up all of the Balkans.

Iraqi Exiles Plea for No Normalization of Ties

LD2402213693 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Dr Sahib al-Hakim, secretary general of Iraq's human rights organization has sent a message to King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, containing a request from Iraqis living in exile not to normalize relations with the Baghdad regime.

Attached to al-Hakim's message was a memorandum, signed by over 100 exiled Iraqi figures from various sectors, institutions, and parties, including independents and intellectual leaders, calling on the custodian of the two holy mosques not to normalize relations with the Iraqi regime, which has violated human rights inside and outside Iraq for a quarter of a century.

Al-Hakim called on the custodian of the two holy mosques to help the Iraqi people, whom he described as suffering the biggest ordeal in their history. The message said: Orphans, widows and detainees under torture in the regime's gaols expect you and the world's free peoples to contribute to bringing an end to the injustice and persecution being perpetrated all over Iraq.

The memorandum called on all countries of the world, particularly UN Security Council members, to charge Saddam and his gang members with war crimes and human rights violations unprecedented in history.

The memorandum said that any country seeking to normalize relations with Saddam Husayn bears great moral, political, and human responsibility regarding the people of Iraq and other peoples who are victims of the Iraqi regime's crimes.

United Arab Emirates

Chief of Staff Seeks Improved Gulf Cooperation

PM2502123093 Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic 21 Feb 93 pp 1, 38

[Report by Muhammad al-Sufyan and 'Abdallah al-Yami: "Emirates Chief of Staff Tells AL-RIYAD: Contacts With Iran To Resolve Islands Issue Peacefully; We Aspire To Increase Gulf Military Coordination"]

[Excerpts] Abu Dhabi—Staff Major General Muhammad Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan, chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the United Arab Emirates [UAE], has revealed that contacts are being made between the UAE and Iran to resolve the three islands issue.

He said that contacts are being made by some brothers from fraternal states to secure a peaceful solution to this problem, in order to safeguard the Arabian Gulf region's security. And we hope that these matters will come into being for the sake of the peoples of the region and their security. [passage omitted]

On coordination among the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states with regard to arms, Maj. Gen. Muhammad Bin-Zayid said, we aspire to increase this coordination. He pointed out that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has made great strides vis-a-vis raising

the level of coordination among the GCC states by embracing the Peninsula Shield forces. "However, I hope that this coordination will be more advanced and rapid." His highness added: A good and pioneering idea was raised at the meeting of the GCC states' defense ministers. I believe it was proposed by His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the [Saudi] second deputy prime minister, defense and aviation minister, and inspector general. It calls for developing the Peninsula Shield forces. It is a pioneering idea which is in line with this coordination and our desire to develop the GCC forces.

Asked about the reason for the UAE's decision to choose the French Leclerc tank, especially as world military and economic circles had expected it to choose U.S. or British tanks, which were used in the past by some GCC states, Maj. Gen. Muhammad Zayid Al Nuhayyan said that the decision to choose this tank was taken a week before the exhibition. He pointed out that the offers submitted to us by several states were nearly the same, but the French tank offer was better. Besides, French tanks are suitable for our ground forces, especially as the UAE has for five years been seeking to develop its Armed Forces. This is in addition to this tank's good performance and power. [passage omitted]

'Minutes' of Saddam Meetings Before Gulf War

Confers With U.S. Charge

JN2302112293 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1245 GMT 22 Feb 93

[Text] Baghdad, 22 Feb (INA)—To reaffirm facts familiar to our great Iraqi people and our glorious Arab nation, as well as to many others; to further clarify Iraq's principled stands and show how Iraq explored all avenues for peace and seized all opportunities to avert the scourge of war; to inform world public opinion and future generations of the allegations and falsehoods of the aggressors so that truth will prevail; and to help researchers and scholars, we will continue to publish the official documents of the immortal Mother of Battles, as well as official minutes of President Saddam Husayn's meetings with officials and other figures who visited the country after the great Day of the Call on 2 August 1990.

Today we publish the minutes of President Saddam Husayn's meeting with U.S. Charge d'Affaires Joe Wilson on 15 Muharram 1411 Hegira, corresponding to 6 August 1990.

Minutes of President Saddam Husayn's meeting with U.S. Charge d'Affaires Joe Wilson in Baghdad on 6 August 1990.

Attendees: Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; Hamid Yusuf Hammadi, secretary to the president; Nizar Hamdun, under secretary at the Foreign Ministry; Muhsin Khalil, press and media secretary; and Mrs. Nancy Johnson, political adviser at the U.S. Embassy.

After exchanging courtesies, the leader president asked: What about diplomacy and politics?

The U.S. charge d'affaires replied: I think that your foreign minister who receives CNN at his office knows more than I do.

The president said: I sent for you to discuss developments after the meeting with the U.S. ambassador in Baghdad.

After that meeting, our talks with the former Kuwaiti Government drew a blank. Hence, what happened, as was announced by the provisional free government in Kuwait and the Revolution Command Council.

The U.S. charge d'affaires said: I have learned about the recent developments through statements. Also, the foreign minister gave me some details.

The president replied: I am also watching the U.S. reaction. We know that when such an event takes place, the United States reacts, whether this event takes place in the Arab world, Asia, Latin America, Africa, Europe, or anywhere else. We are not surprised to see the United States deplore such an action, especially when it is not a party to it. I want to say, however, that the United States should not act impetuously upon wrong advice and do something which might embarrass it.

I say this because irrespective of our trust in the opposite side or its trust in us, one of our traits is to draw attention to what we consider to be harmful in light of present and future developments. You have no doubt seen our letters to Iran during the war in which we offered sincere, free advice on our concept of the future and its developments. Because the advice was too frank, the Iranians thought it was some type of tactic, but we revealed everything on our mind because we wanted peace. We wanted the war to end because we were pained by its continuation.

You are aware of the results. Had Iran taken our advice at the time, it [not further identified] would not have occurred. What was more important is that the war dragged on and the result was not to Iran's liking.

The president said: I will talk about Iraqi-U.S. ties and current developments and what the future would be like if the United States committed a big mistake against itself and the region.

At the outset, I would like to discuss three points which will be inter-connected either partially or entirely during the following discussion.

Kuwait was a state without borders. For many people, Kuwait had not been regarded as a state until 1961, and until 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim issued a decree by which he appointed the Kuwaiti ruler as a district governor affiliated with al-Basrah governorate, thus making Kuwait a district of al-Basrah.

Why did this happen in 1961? 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim and all the Iraqis knew well that Kuwait was an Iraqi territory and that the Kuwaiti ruler was a district governor on the payroll of the Ottoman governor of al-Basrah, that this state of affairs continued until 1913. Then came World War I to yield new conditions.

Therefore, Kuwait now is a state without borders, and regardless of the details of developments in Kuwaiti domestic affairs and in the Iraqi Army, Kuwait is a unique case in the Arab homeland.

The first point is Iraq and Saudi Arabia. You are aware that we have good relations with Saudi Arabia. These relations improved gradually from 1975 until they reached the level attained just before 2 August 1990, this month. Until recently, trust between us had been on a very high level and on all issues pertaining to the region and the Arab homeland. As far as we know concerning the overt U.S. policy—that is, if what we know is the entire U.S. policy or its essence—we have not found that good Iraqi-Saudi ties can harm the United States policy toward Saudi Arabia or the region.

If our analysis is correct, namely, that good Iraqi-Saudi ties cannot harm the U.S. policy, that these relations had

been a factor of stability in the region, then tampering with this relationship greatly harms the region and the U.S. interests.

Therefore, we fail to understand the overnight change and the statements that the U.S. officials are concerned over Saudi security vis-a-vis the Iraqi power, as well as reports and remarks that the next target after Kuwait would be Saudi Arabia.

We are not aware of whether you want to preempt events and push Saudi Arabia to mount a hostile act against Iraq, given your knowledge that Iraq would not remain silent, and thus providing cover for an action for which you are preparing. If you are really concerned about Saudi Arabia, you must understand that taking the Kuwait case as a yardstick is untenable, first because Kuwait is part of Iraq, and second because this part of Iraq behaved in a destructive way toward its own people in Iraq.

You know that we were the first to offer a noninterference and nonaggression pact to Saudi Arabia. We signed this agreement and offered it to Kuwait. The Kuwaiti Government did not endorse it. It seems the Kuwaiti Government had acted upon Western advice, probably British, because we know that some Western quarters were displeased with the agreement and ridiculed it. They were saying that this was a strange thing, as if France were offering a similar agreement to Britain. I was so pleased when the decisions were made and we had no agreement with Kuwait. For had we had such an agreement, this would have prevented what happened.

The Saudis are our brothers. If things go the way they are now, they will continue to be our brothers, unless you want to incite them to act against us; then each one must defend himself.

So if you are worried about Saudi Arabia, then you are not being realistic. But if you are feigning worry so as to make Saudi Arabia worried as well, then this is a different matter.

Of course, we will tell our Saudi brothers the same thing. We will also tell them that we are willing to give them every guarantee to assure them about the future. In fact, it is our duty to defend Saudi Arabia if any foreigner attacks it.

As for the relationship between Arabs, it might become tense or improve overnight. The Saudis have a guarantee, because we respect our commitments and pledges and are concerned for our credibility.

Also, there have been rumors that Saddam Husayn made a promise to some officials that he would not use force against Kuwait under any circumstances. We also learned that some Arab officials gave such an impression to the United States. What concerns me is that the Americans should not have any impression that we do not care about our credibility.

What happened is that some Arab brothers were talking to me about Iraqi forces heading for Kuwait. They were saying that the Kuwaitis wwere worried and afraid. I told them that we pledge not to carry out any military action before the meeting scheduled to be held in Jeddah. This is indeed what happened.

And because we were really waiting for a serious outcome out of the Jeddah meeting, we did not make the decision until after the return of the vice chairman of the Revolution Command Council from Jeddah to tell us what the Kuwaiti position was.

Some people say that the action took place rather quickly, meaning that there had been plans prior to the Jeddah meeting. Yes, such a possibility had preceded the Jeddah meeting, but it was not the first choice in our plan. We had basically wanted to regain our rights through negotiations.

When our vital interests were subjected to a certain, premeditated threat, and when all other means failed to reach a solution, we used military force.

You know that Iraqi oil has been sold to you since we came to power, although relations were severed, and the volume of our dealings increased after the resumption of diplomatic relations in 1984. Until you decided to boycott Iraqi oil, you imported a little less than one third of what we sold on the world oil market. This level of sales was not worked out by technicians or based on economic market calculations, but resulted from a political decision.

We know you have a declared policy that your trade should go on and that oil should continue to flow to the United States.

So, what is the danger that makes you discuss the military action in which you will be defeated, God willing? I will tell you how you will be defeated.

You are a superpower, and I know you are able to hurt us, but you will lose the region after the operation and you will fail to make us kneel, even if you use all U.S. weapons.

You can destroy the economic, scientific, and oil installations, some of them totally and others partially, but the more you destroy the more you will be burdened.

Moreover, we will not remain silent over your interests in the region.

When did we strike Kuwait?

When it became clear to us that either we accept the conspiracy and its grave consequences or we keep Iraq strong, economically and politically.

Do not put us in a similar situation once again. If we see that the chances of life are being narrowed for us, we will deny them to others.

I know you are a superpower and are able to hurt and destroy, but no one except God Almighty can destroy man.

But why do you want to antagonize us?

You made grave mistakes when you lost your friends in the region and you distorted their personality until they became unable to affect their peoples. I urge you to give your Arab friends in the region a chance to work, make conclusions, and reconsider the structure of their personalities so that they can become fair in the eyes of their people. Meanwhile, we believe you are able to arrange your interests with moderate, strong, and realistic states more than you do with weak states.

You are talking about Iraq's aggressiveness.

If Iraq is aggressive, then why did you maintain dialogue with it during the war with Iran? Did you like aggressiveness at that time? Regarding our 2 April 1990 statement, you know that we have done so because certain Western quarters, including U.S. and Zionist quarters, were paving the way for aggression against us. We had then to tell Israel, before it carries out any foolish act, that we are able to harm it. We think this would be more beneficial to peace than to keep silent and let Israel commit a foolish act and then respond to it.

You remember that during the war with Iran, Baghdad came under constant Iranian shelling for approximately one year or less, and when we possessed missiles, we did not use them but warned Tehran by saying: We possess missiles, and you have to be cautious or we will respond and you will be sorry.

Had Iran heeded the advice, the reply would not have taken place. God be praised that Israel has thus far heeded the warning. Does this not better serve the cause of peace? Did we have to remain silent so that Israel would strike at Baghdad and then we would reply? You know that Baghdad and other cities are spread out and they all can endure, but the cities of Israel cannot. Thus, we are glad that no collision has thus far happened. Which is closer to peace: Satisfaction over the absence of collision, or the one who wanted to attack the Arabs even though he is usurping their land? Briefly speaking, if what the U.S. President wants is what is declared about the U.S. interests in the region, as we have discussed, then we view escalation, tension, and military action as contrary to these interests. But if there are other undeclared interests which are unknown to us, this is then another matter. In any case, we want stability and peace, but we also hate submission and will not accept it. We hate hunger because our people were hungry for a thousand years and hunger shall not return to them. We look forward to the future with honor and legitimate human efforts, including the building of good and developed relations with the United States, if it so wishes. This is my new message for President Bush.

The U.S. charge d'affaires said: Thank you, Mr. President. I will certainly convey these words to my government. I will first convey them by telephone and then in writing. As you have pointed out, this is a critical time, not only for Iraqi-U.S. relations, but also for regional stability. The situation is serious for the entire world.

The president asked why serious for the world. The charge d'affaires answered: You see, as I believe, that the world economic and trade markets are now experiencing a state of chaos and instability. The president said: You did that. Regarding oil, we accepted the price of $21 per barrel at OPEC's recent meeting in Geneva. Had it not been for your stand and insistence on boycotting Iraq, this price could have be stabilized or dropped to $19, $18, or perhaps $17, or it could be $22, nothing else.

But when boycotts occur and 5 million barrels are withheld from the world oil market, it is only natural that oil prices go up. We will tell the consumer that it was your government which wanted this. We abide by OPEC's price of $21. Some oil traders and interest seekers in the industrialized nations may benefit from price hikes, but the people will not. This, of course, if our opinion is made known to the U.S. public.

A small part of Iraq—Kuwait—instead of respecting the larger Iraq and its interests, was encouraged by some to carry out a conspiratorial role against Iraq with the aim of crushing its economy. Therefore, we defended ourselves without contemplating any harm to the Americans or their interests.

The U.S. charge d'affaires said: I believe I may have hit a raw nerve by saying that the current situation poses a threat to the world. What I wanted to say is that in these critical days, it is necessary that we keep talking to one another to avoid mishaps and miscalculations. This is the method that dampens the tense and sometimes emotional situation.

From this premise, I welcome this opportunity to deliver the letter. I would like to make two remarks here, after which I will reconfirm certain points you have mentioned to make sure that I understand them correctly. I will then communicate my President's reply to you or to your foreign minister.

First part of the letter: As I understood, you have said that Kuwait is part of Iraq.

The president said: Yes, this is true from an historical point of view. We say this to explain that instead of cooperating with Iraq, Kuwait goaded by the complex it has of being only a part and, maybe for other reasons as well, conspired against the whole. Kuwait should have respected this unique relationship and should have adopted a more brotherly attitude than, let us say, Egypt or Saudi Arabia. These countries maintain relations with Iraq that are far more advanced than what Kuwait's relations are with Iraq.

The U.S. charge d'affaires said: It is very important that I understand the exact nature of this relationship.

The president said: The relationship is defined by the Iraqi and Kuwait people. It is not up to me, the Americans, or the Soviets to define it. The relationship should be a brotherly relationship that takes into consideration the two sides' security, as well as a balanced approach to pan-Arab security and to the two countries' mutual interests.

The president added: This relationship was diametrically opposed to all this, particularly in recent months.

I insisted that Jabir al-Ahmad have the borders demarcated. He replied by saying: Leave it to the other officials. We used to tell them: Let us settle the issue of borders. They replied: We are not in a hurry when it comes to this issue.

We used to be astonished by this attitude. Then we understood that he wanted to carry out a conspiratorial role.

The U.S. charge d'affaires said: My second question, or the second point I would like to raise: You have spoken about the fraternal relationship between you and Saudi Arabia, the security agreement, noninterference in domestic affairs, and nonaggression. I would like to communicate my government's misgivings over Iraq's intentions at this moment. I believe you have replied to our misgivings in a general manner.

The president said: What will reassure you that these misgivings are not justified? The U.S. charge d'affaires said: I do not know what would reassure us. I will have to ask my President. However, I know that you are explicit and frank. Permit me to ask you a direct question: Can you assure me that in case there is no U.S. military action, or, as you have mentioned, a Saudi action encouraged by us, that you have no intention of undertaking any offensive military action against Saudi Arabia?

The president leader said: You can reassure Saudi Arabia and all the countries in the Middle East that we do not attack those who do not attack us. We do not harm those who do not harm us. Those who seek our friendship, we rush to give it to them. This is our policy. We resort to such a policy not for tactical purposes, as some claim, but for humanitarian reasons.

As for Saudi Arabia, it would never cross my mind to ask such a question because we have fraternal relations with Saudi Arabia, unless you know something about them of which we are not aware.

They tell us: We are your brothers. It is only natural that we are not disturbed by Saudi Arabia's hosting Sa'd and Jabir for considerations we understand. But, of course, we do get disturbed if they use them as an excuse for any action against Iraq and Kuwait.

On this occasion, convey my greetings to President Bush and tell him to consider Sa'd, Jabir, and the clique that is with them as something of the past. This is life. It is not the only family in the region which used to rule and has since stepped down.

The U.S. charge d'affaires said: Yes, and in other areas of the world as well.

The leader president added: So as to reassure the United States about its interests and because we understand that U.S. concern over its interests is legitimate, the United States should not make much fuss if it wants us to know where legitimate U.S. interests are and to reassure it about them.

I do not say this for tactical reasons. I did not want to see you before the blockade, and I am not seeking to lift it or make what has happened receive a U.S. welcome. This is not my aim. My aim is to understand where the legitimate U.S. interests are and to advise the United States not to go too far and make it difficult for us, and it as well, to retreat.

The U.S. charge d'affaires said: I will convey this to my government, and I should return to my government for a reply.

The leader president said: I too want you to return to your government.

The U.S. charge d'affaires said: I have come here carrying three ideas reflecting my government's concern. The first pertains to the invasion, and you know our position on that; the second concerns your future intentions toward Saudi Arabia; and the third is related to the safety of American nationals, especially to giving them a chance to leave this country if they so wish. As you know, Americans in the United States are anxious to see Americans enabled to leave if they desire.

I also express my concern over Americans in Kuwait, despite the withdrawal which was carried out.

The leader president said: Why did the Americans say there was no withdrawal while you are saying you clearly saw Iraqi forces withdrawing?

The U.S. charge d'affaires said: We saw three withdrawing convoys in al-Basrah, but not all the forces.

The leader president said: Forces usually enter in two or three days, but their withdrawal is not like their entry. Tomorrow, Tuesday, there will be another withdrawal. Withdrawal depends on the international atmosphere, but what is certain is that we will not leave Kuwait an easy morsel for anyone to devour. We will fight the entire world over it and we will form new forces.

Therefore, any quick withdrawal of forces will depend on the extent of threat or tranquillity. It is natural that the greater the threat, the stronger the forces become. We do not want to make our army like that of Syria, or make the Kuwaiti Army like the Lebanese Army. People of all

nationalities exist in Kuwait, and I believe it is not wise to let the Iraqi Army withdraw very hastily and let people [in Kuwait] band into militias like in Lebanon.

His excellency also said: Several Arab sides proposed that the provisional government form several militias, but we advised it to reject this and to join the popular army they had formed.

Regarding Americans in Iraq or Kuwait, all people, including Iraqis and foreigners in Iraq or Kuwait, are not allowed to travel. You and your sources know that our army has behaved in a very disciplined manner toward foreigners. Nevertheless, they can come here, as security prevails in Baghdad.

The U.S. charge d'affaires said: Let me ask you directly. When will you allow American nationals residing here or visiting the country to leave?

The leader president said: Foreigners or Americans?

The U.S. charge d'affaires said: I am pleased that you mean all the foreigners, but I will not allow myself to speak in the name of others.

The leader president said: We will certainly discuss this matter, and the decision we will be made shortly and conveyed to you.

The U.S. charge d'affaires said: Allow me to demand that the decision be issued quickly, as my government and people are sensitive about this issue.

The leader president said: I understand this.

The U.S. charge d'affaires said: Finally, I wish to say or comment on two points. You have noted the Iraqi Armed Forces' good conduct in Kuwait. This was affirmed to me also by the minister and the Foreign Ministry under secretary, and I have the opportunity to believe this is the case. Allow me, with mutual concern, to draw your government's attention to this. Yesterday, some Iraqi soldiers entered the building of the embassy chancellry in Kuwait. This, of course, runs contrary to the policy you have just noted, and is also a violation of diplomatic immunity. I would not have raised this subject if you had not referred to that issue.

The leader president instructed the [president's] secretary to follow up on the matter quickly.

The president said: Yesterday, an officer passed by and told me about certain elements violating the law and robbing stores. They caught some of the culprits, many being of different nationalities. They were citizens who may have no other intention but to plunder, and they were apprehended by authorities. At any rate, if the Army has done this, we would tell you that the Army has done this deed. We would also tell you that this was a mistake which should not have happened and we will rectify it.

The U.S. charge d'affaires said: One last thing. In these critical days, we have special concern for the safety of American citizens, more concern than over any other issue.

The president, laughing, said: If you are in a hurry to attack us, we will quickly leave them for you.

The U.S. charge d'affaires said: My duty is to provide them with the opportunity to choose one of two options: To leave or stay. I wish to assert to you that I plan to stay and I would like to live [as received]. But, I say that during this crisis, my colleagues in the Iraqi Foreign Ministry have opened all doors, at all times, from 0800 to 0400 [as received]. I appreciate this. I also appreciate your desire to meet with me at this time and to keep me informed as to the status of our stranded citizens.

The leader president: As far as we and our Army are concerned, and as far as the powers of the military commanders in Kuwait are concerned, you can rest assured about them.

The U.S. charge d'affaires said: I wish to commend the high professionalism of the Foreign Ministry, particularly with regard to dialogue, which is the avenue of foreign and diplomatic life. Therefore, I value this opportunity to exchange views.

At the conclusion of the meeting, cordial greetings and wishes were exchanged.

Meets With Yemeni Leader

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[Text] Baghdad, 21 Feb (INA)—INA continues to transmit the text of the minutes of meetings His Excellency President Saddam Husayn held with a number of officials and popular delegations in the aftermath of the auspicious Day of the Call of 2 August 1990, and at later stages of the great showdown represented by the eternal Mother of Battles.

Today, INA will transmit the text of the minutes of the meeting held between His Excellency President Saddam Husayn and his brother Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih on 4 August 1990 [in Baghdad] to explain facts as they are, to vindicate truth, and to provide our Iraqi people, our Arab nation, and the people of the world with pertinent information, free of the distortion and misinformation being attempted by the aggressors and their lackeys.

The following is the text of the minutes of the meeting:

The meeting was attended on the Iraqi side by 'Izzat Ibrahim, vice chairman of the Revolution Command Council; First Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yasin Ramadan; Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; and Culture and Information Minister Latif Nusayyif Jasim.

On the Yemeni side, the meeting was attended by Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid; 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; and Hasan Makki.

After exchanging words of cordiality and welcome, the president inquired about his brothers, the Yemeni leaders and ministers. President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih said: They are all well and send their greetings.

The leader president said: The Iraqis are pleased by your visit and they hope that you visit us frequently. You are welcome.

President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih said: May God bless you.

The leader president said: Three weeks ago, or less than a month ago, it did not occur to us to carry out any action against Kuwait. However, we noticed this insistence on plotting and on cutting off a part of our land, we and the leadership began to consider a solution. The entire leadership said with one voice: We will not a accept this situation because it will mean our fall. We should not fail to supply our people with food two years after the end of war with Iran. If we fail to reach an understanding with the Croesus-like people through peaceful means and dialogue, what shall we do?

They then said: We authorize you to take action. We then resumed discussion and found that we should not keep silent over cutting off part and using it against Iraq. It is no secret that we are not like others who deal with statements and words. We know that Kuwait was cut from Iraq a long time ago for two reasons: oil and geography.

I must say that the monarchical era in Iraq was, despite its cooperation with the British, patriotic with regard to this issue, Kuwait.

Iraq has oil stretching from the north to south, but it was clear that the plans of the colonialist forces aimed to concentrate civilization and population in one place and the quasi-men in another place to prevent any interaction between them. I intend to talk about this issue at the upcoming summit conference in Cairo and to stress that it is time to deal with oil overindulgence in certain Arab states and the abasing poverty in other Arab states which has lead to this contemptible separation.

His excellency added: The Kuwaiti rulers' behavior was utterly detestable. I remember that when al-Sadat went to Jerusalem, when I was vice president, I told my brothers at the command that what al-Sadat had done was very bad and he deserved to be censured and denounced. But we must not forget those Arabs who encouraged al-Sadat to carry out this move. When the amirs in the Gulf stockpile billions and go to this or that country, including Arab countries, to meet with women and commit sins, then al-Sadat will see that what he had done is of a lesser evil.

I said this at the command and I wept at the time. I also highlighted this strange separation existing within the Arab nation; civilization, culture, and densely populated areas on one side and wealth, paltriness, and deception on the other.

Is it permissible for the president of Egypt, with 55 million people behind him, to carry his bag and move from one Gulf country to another begging them to finance part of Egypt's wheat purchases?

At least with respect to the basics, we do not lack in terms of age, maturity, and experience. Our decision is based on all this background. His excellency said: Many of our daily affairs and development issues, as well as the attempt to remove the effects of the war, have been suspended for this reason. We had great hopes that the wealthy would respond and cooperate with us.

What is needed is that money should be used to serve the large numbers rather than be used against them. This did not take place. This step might be an incentive to others so that they may realize what most of the poor Arabs need.

The Arab nation is crumbling. The reason is Arab oil.

Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, as well as Saddam and others, are now forced to wear new suits and have luxury items after they saw the opulence in the Gulf countries.

In the past, priorities, designations, and leverages in the Arab countries used to be defined by the activities of men, their sacrifices, and by man's action in the shaping of civilization.

Yemen, Egypt, and Tunisia have now fallen back and have been overshadowed by countries whose populations do not exceed a few thousand, but which gained prominence because they have oil and more money than they need.

I said this in the past, at a time when we still had billions of dollars. Still, we thank God because our principles do not change with the presence or absence of billions of dollars.

As for what the Kuwaiti rulers and their aides have done, they did more than what we had mentioned in our memorandums to the Arab League.

Comrade 'Izzat Ibrahim told Sa'd al-'Abdallah in Jeddah: How do you confront me without bringing a solution? This means you are pushing me to slaughter you.

They want to bring Iraq down to the level of the other Arab countries. They want to line up its women and choose from them as they do with the Arab and Egyptian women. By God, I will not let them do this, even if they have to impoverish all Iraq.

These people are oil agents acting on behalf of the United States. Another factor which must be addressed has surfaced. They felt that Iraq cannot see itself enjoying abundant wealth while its brothers go hungry.

We have recordings of their voices while they were ridiculing Iraq and slandering its leadership.

The custodian of the two holy mosques is the alias used by King Fahd. Well, does not the Jerusalem shrine also need a custodian? Why then have they failed to accord this issue the proper status dictated by faith and jihad? Our peasant grandfathers related to us stories, teaching us how nations prosper, stories of how a king was dethroned, who afterward sought the assistance of some people who helped him financially, helped him recruit an army, and thus enabled him to regain his throne. The values cherished by such stories do not move these people, nor do they move their sentiments. That is why they conspired against Iraq when it said that it would aid its brothers.

For instance, take al-Sadat; they advised him to go downhill and then abandoned him, leaving him to meet his fate. Four weeks ago, we intercepted a conversation between these rulers, during which one of them said: "Mr. So and So, do you remember how we milked Iraq at the 1978 summit?"

How can we ask King Husayn to turn his country into a combat arena and fail to aid him? Are they not supposed to address him, saying: Do what you have to do; we will reconstruct Jordan if it is destroyed by war. We will purchase arms for you too.

Iraq, which defended them over a 10-year period, is deemed a debtor which must repay its debts to them. The amirs' wealth has enslaved the nation and become so threatening that if not rebelled against, it would devour the entire nation.

Iraq does not have claims to any territory "other than Kuwait." Others must be careful. Everybody must now say: I am an Arab. Everybody must contribute to the development and defense of the Arab homeland. We should say: Mr. So and So, you must pay a specific amount of money. If you fail to do so, we will get your headdress and batter your face with it until the headdress is torn to pieces. We must use such words with such people. At both the Amman and Baghdad summits, we addressed pan-Arab concerns as well as the issue of political and economic pan-Arab security. We explained how this security could be achieved. However, the current Arab state of affairs indicates that there is a dichotomy between excessively wealthy societies and poor entities.

I addressed Husni Mubarak, saying: Your Army will not defend Kuwait against the Iranian danger because it does not have a reason to fight in defense of Kuwait. Your country is poor, while Kuwait is excessively wealthy. However, if an Iranian division were to infiltrate into Saudi or Emirian territory, nobody would fight it as audaciously as it would be fought on Iraqi territory.

They have caused the Arabs to experience a deteriorating state of affairs, which will in turn cause them to reach rock bottom. This state of affairs will not permit anybody to come to their rescue. Khomeyni raised slogans, despising them. Arab traditions state that if one is to become a shaykh, he must be generous and soldierly.

His excellency the president continued: Kuwait is part of Iraq. Its governor continued to receive his salary from the al-Basrah governor until 1913. The Kuwaiti ruler and his kinfolk are nomads. They are not people of chivalry and magnanimity. They were thrown out of Najd, and then from Qatar. Afterward, they came to al-Qawasim, and then to the area they have been occupying. That is because the al-Basrah governor allowed them to reside in this area and to depend on fishing as a source of livelihood.

Some might say that this is part of the history in 1913. That is true, but Kuwait was only recognized as a state in 1963. Had there been no hatred between 'Abd-al-Nasir and 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim, Kuwait would not have come into being as a state in the first place.

If it is the logic of opportunities, then they have pushed us to reseize the opportunity. If it is the logic of tribalism and they wish to return to the Arab tribe, they must pay blood money. These people want to be part of us, but they would not defend us or help the tribe pay the blood money.

At the 1978 Baghdad summit, we proposed the establishment of a fund to support the Arab front. We proposed the same thing at the Amman summit to help development in the Arab states. We proposed that the fund should have a budget of $15 billion. That amount was then reduced to $10 billion, $5 billion, and, finally, to $500 million.

That oil wealth was not attained through sweat and blood. That wealth is hidden underground and is extracted by foreigners. So how can we be a single tribe and a single family when the poor do not have a share of that wealth? I told them: Call this situation whatever you wish. But why is it when you help the Arab, you demean and belittle him, and make him bear a grudge against everything? If you tell him this is what I have, so take it, and if I could, I would have paid more, then this could be accepted.

His excellency said: We are prepared to counter any aggression, even if we have to mobilize all the women in Iraq. We will turn Iraq into a graveyard for the invaders. This may be a good beginning for the Arab nation. We will not speak to them behind the scenes. When they hesitated to attend the Baghdad summit out of fear that we may ask them to help the Arabs, we told them not to fear and assured them that we will not embarrass them with financial commitments.

President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih said: Everything was clear at the summit.

The leader president said: I have said this to King Husayn, and brother Taha Yasin Ramadan said it to

you. We announced a general mobilization in the war against Iran and formed new Army divisions, which, at the end of the war, numbered 87 divisions. We demobilized several of them when the war ended, but we have now put 15 divisions back into service. Even the women volunteered to defend dignity, sovereignty, and security.

President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih said: We have listened to your concerns, which are similar to Yemen's. There must be a pause to discuss this matter, the economic and international pressures, how to absorb the first shock, and the possibility of intervention by foreign powers. These points must be discussed. Since Iraq has made that decision after studying the possibilities, what is important now is the question of how to face them. We are with you in the arena and there is almost no difference between us in our positions and principles.

'Ali Salim al-Bid said: We have to study our circumstances and analyze our Arab and international conditions, and know how to face developments, reach a common view, and continue the march. We were surprised by what has happened now. In your July speech, it was clear that now Arab forces will emerge, so how can we steer the developments and influence the general course. We will be with you, and a new Arab public opinion will develop, so how can we re-form this Arab conscience and stand fast? The question is: The shock comes first and then dies down slowly. Still, how will events develop, and we are interested in knowing how are you going to face them? Brother Taha said you have taken everything into account. That is good.

It seems that we have used our moral weight to curb our people's claim to Kuwait in the past. This was clear in the feelings and stands of citizens after 2 August. The historical background of Kuwait is well known.

When oil was nationalized in 1972, the people were emotional but they had political awareness. At the same time, they were afraid that it would meet the same fate as the Musaddiq experiment in Iran.

During the war with Iran, the people were unanimous on victory, and not war. In the first years of the war, Iraq was not unanimous on fighting because of the situation of our Kurdish people in the north. But do you know that we have now Kurdish military formations guarding the Republican Palace?

My brother the vice president, you are right. I tell you and my brother the president that had we had another choice, we would not have entered Kuwait. But the timing was the result of circumstances prevailing during almost no longer than a month from this moment. We had even depended on the bad people in terms of solidarity, noninterference in domestic affairs, and not using force, but in the last two months we have had great doubts about their adherence to these principles.

They have prompted King Husayn to put things very clearly and very painfully. Their response to him at the Baghdad summit was very meager. I personally saw barefooted people in Yemen; have they not seen them? Yemen was united, and they did not even send a congratulations cable or a gift. They keep records of how much we owe them, which is nothing compared to around $102 billion Iraq had spent during the war to import weapons and hardware.

Once Taha Yasin Ramadan was visiting a country, and I asked him to sign an agreement to purchase tanks. He looked at the list and thought the number needed was 700 tanks. But I actually asked him to purchase 7,000 tanks to face the Iranian threat and protect our principles and dignity. Money has no value without safety and dignity. We did all that not only to protect Iraq, but also to protect the Arab nation and the Gulf states from the Iranian threat.

They did not want to hold a summit in Baghdad. Why? Is this not your Baghdad which protected your thrones and treasures? Now they are hounding the PLO because of its chairman's attitude toward the Baghdad summit. They are also proposing a mini-summit to be attended by the Moroccan king and the Algerian president. We said, no. We want Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih to attend.

They have chosen the time and method of plotting against us, but sometimes computer calculations do not work. They thought they would topple us during the nationalization of oil, but they later came to beg us.

But is the conspiracy against Iraq alone? No, they basically do not want to see any strong country.

President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih said: This is true.

The leader president added: We had taken into consideration the intervention of the United States and Israel without using ground forces, but by using missiles and aircraft. We, for our part, will strike them and make them bleed.

His excellency added: Through Kuwait the dignity of the Arab nation is restored and correct calculations go into correct records.

The leader president said: God damn weakness; God bless God-fearing strength.

President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih said: We are part of what is happening, and we should direct and remobilize the people.

The leader president said: You are right. Events will facilitate matters. When people hear President 'Ali say something, they realize it is different from what they hear from Jabir. The Arab nation is mostly made up of poor people, and those people listen well.

When we presented an agreement on noninterference in internal affairs and nonuse of force to them, Kuwait's rulers rejected it. See how deep-rooted their plotting is. Imagine, Iraq offers Kuwait, which was part of it, such a document and they reject it.

President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih said: Yesterday Prince Sultan said something that implied threats. When the Iraqi Army moved into Kuwait, they contacted us on convening a Security Council meeting. We held a meeting of the Presidential Council, and we said that we did not support the convening of a Security Council meeting, and we believe that the problem should be resolved by the Arabs.

King Husayn contacted us. President Mubarak also contacted us and told me: "Saddam has done it...the world will be on fire." I spoke with President Bush and I told him that these are Arab affairs. He said that Fahd has spoken about giving Bubiyan, money, and some land to Iraq. He agreed that the Kuwaitis have made serious mistakes.

I told President Mubarak: "Let's move," and he replied: "King Fahd is pressuring me, and we are trying to delay the decision. But the journalists have embarrassed us. I went to President Saddam and I told him you are right. I went to the Kuwaitis and Saudis and they told me that they are facing pressures, and I asked them to be firm." I told Mubarak: "Then you are to blame."

The leader president said: I will tell you what happened. Husni Mubarak told me that the Kuwaitis had complained that there was an Iraqi military buildup. I told him: Regardless of the size of the buildup and where this buildup is....he interrupted me saying: "They are very frightened." I told him: "Let them be frightened, but I tell you that until the Jeddah meeting is held, we will not take any action." He should have understood what I said. It meant that we are awaiting the results of the meeting. If such results are not in line with our rights, military action will be taken. I told him: "Please do not reassure the Kuwaitis." But it seems that he went and reassured them and reassured others, and he led them to a disaster. Furthermore, brother president, our hearts were comforted. We have hit the Fahd that encroached on Iraq. Their conduct has pained our hearts. When Mubarak was in Baghdad, and I spoke to him about our problems, he told me that they are a passing cloud, and that he will speak with the Kuwaitis. How can such things not harm relations? We have been honorably committed to the security agreement with Saudi Arabia.

President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih said: Let's discuss the subject with King Fahd.

The leader president said: Nevertheless, we should relentlessly explain where Egypt's interests are. Not to draw Husni Mubarak to our side, but to let him understand that what we have done is in the interest of Egypt too.

Following the general meeting, a meeting between the two presidents was held.

Relatives of Imprisoned Swedes Depart Baghdad

NC2402140193 Paris AFP in English 1323 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Baghdad, Feb 24 (AFP)—Relatives of three Swedes held in an Iraqi jail for more than five months left Baghdad on Wednesday without a response to their appeal for the prisoners' release, the Swedish embassy said.

The mother of Stefan Wihlborg, the wife of Christer Stroemgren and the wife and daughter of Leif Westberg delivered the appeal to Iraqi authorities after the start of their visit on Saturday.

They saw the prisoners for three days in Abu Gharib jail, 30 kilometres (20 miles) west of Baghdad. It was the women's second such visit since the Swedes' detention in September.

In December, Iraq rejected an appeal from Swedish officials for the release of the men, sentenced to seven years imprisonment for illegal entry into Iraq.

Stroemgren, Westberg and Wihlborg, all employees of the Swedish telecommunications company Ericsson in Kuwait, have said they strayed into Iraq by mistake.

They had left Kuwait City for an oilfield north of the capital where they were to install mobile telephone base stations, but they lost their way and drove across the border.

Two Britons serving 10-year and seven-year sentences for illegal entry to Iraq were allowed visits by family members in early February.

UN Rejects Offer To Fund Palestinian Deficit

JN2502103093 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 25 Feb 93 pp 1, 5

[Excerpt] Amman—The United Nations has informed the Palestinians that it could not accept an Iraqi offer to make up for the deficit in the budget of the main agency that helps Palestinian refugees, saying the proposal could not be entertained outside the framework of Security Council resolutions already issued on Iraqi oil sales, informed sources said Wednesday.

"The UN secretariat has notified the Palestinian observer (at the world body) that the proposal is not acceptable," said one source. The source added that the conclusion was made after informal consultations between the secretary-general Butrus-Ghali, and members of the Security Council.

"The proposal was not formally tabled since there was no legal base to it," said a diplomatic source. "The main question was over the context of the Iraqi offer and the Iraqis were not exactly very forthcoming in this regard," said the source. "They alternated between indicating that the $50 million offer was independent and saying it could be part of UN-supervised oil exports envisaged

under (Security Council resolutions) 706 and 712," the diplomat told the JORDAN TIMES.

According to another diplomatic source, the Iraqi offer, made by President Saddam Husayn to Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat early this month, was seen "aimed at circumventing" Resolution 706 and 712—which call for a one-time Iraqi oil sale worth $1.6 billion under UN supervision to pay for UN costs related to the Gulf war, reparations to victims of the war and buy food and medicine for the people of Iraq. The Iraqi proposal was made after the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestine refugees reported a budget deficit in its operations which offer assistance to Palestine refugees living in the occupied territories, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon.

Baghdad has not made any official comment on the issue and its studious silence was interpreted by most analysts as waiting for the West, particularly Washington, to respond to the proposal. [passage omitted]

Opposition Conference Issues Statement 22 Feb

NC2402201593 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1635 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Press statement released by the Executive Council of the Unified Iraqi Conference at the conclusion of its meetings in Salah al-Din on 22 February—read by announcer]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful and compassionate: The Executive Council of the Unified Iraqi Conference held its third meeting in liberated Iraqi Kurdistan from 16-21 February 1993, with the participation and supervision of the Presidential Council comprising his eminence Muhammad Bahr-al-'Ulum, Mas'ud Barzani, and Major General Hasan al-Naqib.

The delegates studied political developments in Iraq, particularly after the dictatorial regime's attempts to worsen the situation and bombard the international allied forces and other areas and targets in Iraq. These actions increased our people's suffering and destroyed more property without justification. They condemned the dictatorship's adventures that embroiled our country in futile wars and conflicts, exposed our homeland's sovereignty to violation, and mortgaged its future. They stressed their concern about safeguarding our homeland and people's interests. They blamed Saddam Husayn and his henchmen for the consequences of their heedless aggressive policies and their (?disdain) for our country's resources and the region's security and peace. Saddam and his clique exposed beloved Iraq to ordeals and destruction. This situation requires us to renew our demand that Saddam Husayn and his clique be brought to international justice. They decided to expedite efforts to prepare an international bill of indictment to submit to the United Nations.

The delegates appealed to the international community, the United Nations, and the Security Council to implement Security Council Resolution 688 to ensure respect for human rights in Iraq. They recommended that the Executive Council do all it can to corroborate and consolidate this resolution and find a suitable mechanism for its implementation and incorporation in Chapter Seven. They urged the Executive Council to try to get the Security Council to pass a new, legally binding resolution in line with the UN Charter.

The delegates discussed international, regional, and Arab developments and their effects on the situation in Iraq. They also discussed a working plan they endorsed to consolidate their moves at home and abroad. They heard a detailed report on the Executive Council of the Unified Iraqi Conference's internal and external activities and made important observations on the plan of action. They stressed the importance of promoting a media campaign on every level.

Certain members of the Presidential Council and Executive Council remarked on the situation in Kurdistan and south Iraq and on developments in Baghdad and other Iraqi cities. They denounced the escalation of acts of terror, repression, and annihilation. They greeted the second anniversary of the brave uprising in Iraq and hailed its pure martyrs. They hailed the continuing brave resistance in south Iraq, the marshland area, and throughout Iraq and called for promoting it.

They assessed the Executive Council of the Unified Iraqi Conference's activities in international relations and organizations. They called for consolidating these relations and promoting work in this field. Assessing the Arab, Islamic, and international situations, the delegates highlighted the importance of consolidating and coordinating ties between our people and their neighbors based on common and mutual interests. They called for strengthening Conference relations with Arab and other countries. They decided to send delegations and messages to these countries, particularly Syria, Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates, to safeguard the rights of the Iraqi people and neighboring countries.

The delegates discussed relief supplies and the need to exert efforts to ensure the distribution of aid to the Iraqi people, particularly in south and north Iraq. They condemned efforts by certain parties that seek to postpone the distribution of relief supplies through government agencies. They called for continuing active efforts toward this goal, especially as Iraq is suffering a real disaster, general starvation, and other side effects.

The conference denounced recent explosions in Kurdistan and blamed Saddam Husayn and his clique for wasting the lives of innocent citizens. They also denounced the imposed economic embargo.

The delegates appealed to the Armed Forces and members of the ruling party to dissociate themselves from the regime, to stand by the people, to leave tyrant Saddam to

face his fate alone, to denounce the policy of mass punishment, and to reiterate that the followers and members of the ruling party and the military institution who dissociate themselves will be pardoned.

Participants paid tribute to the representatives of the Islamic trend who took part in the meeting after clearing up concerns responsibly.

An Executive Council delegation held talks in Tehran before meeting in Salah al-Din with conservative Muslim representatives. The talks were described as positive and reflected a great sense of responsibility. After reaching an agreement with the Muslim conservatives, it was agreed that they would share the responsibility and join in the Executive Council's meetings and activity.

The delegates recommended that contacts and dialogue continue with those powers that still have reservations so as to strengthen and expand the conference's foundation and activities. They decided to set up specialized bureaus, for international relations, Arab and Islamic relations, nationalist relations, media, financial affairs, constitutional and legal affairs, economic affairs, research and studies, [words indistinct], Iraqi expatriate affairs, and a bureau in charge of relations with the United Nations and international organizations. They also adopted a resolution to coordinate with the Kurdistan regional government.

Participants recommended implementing the National Assembly's decision to set up a human rights bureau and an ad hoc committee to follow up southern region affairs. They also adopted special resolutions to strengthen military and field action to speed up the overthrow of the ruling regime.

Concluding its third session, the Executive Council said it will keep up the struggle to realize our people's goal of setting up a pluralistic and democratic system, guaranteeing the constitutional transfer of authority, setting up a state of institution and law, and respecting human rights.

Noting with admiration the democratic experience in Kurdistan and the setting up of constitutional institutions, the Executive Council reiterated its insistence on the Kurdish people's national rights and stated that it abides by the National Assembly's decision to organize relations between Iraq's Kurds and Arabs. It said the Unified Iraqi National Conference respects the Kurdish people's right to determine the form of their relations with the other partners in the same homeland, as represented in the system of federal states. This, the conference believes, calls for rebuilding the Iraqi state in accordance with the constitution chosen by the people after overthrowing Saddam Husayn and his regime and selecting the political alternative within a unified, sovereign, and constitutional Iraq.

The delegates stated a need to abolish political sectarianism; to end ethnic and racist repression; to respect the rights of Turkomen, Assyrians, and every sect of Iraqi society; to establish security and stability; to generalize public freedoms; to eliminate the effects of the destructive war and the economic embargo; and to reconstruct the country within the framework of a realistic development plan based on the independent Iraqi national will.

As they greeted the sons of the Iraqi people and the Arab and Muslim nations on the blessed month of Ramadan, the members of the Presidential and Executive Councils renewed their pledge to continue jihad and struggle until the despotic regime is overthrown.

The meeting concluded with a prayer for our oppressed people to be freed of despotism and to be granted victory soon.

[Signed] The Executive Council of the Unified Iraqi National Conference, Salah al-Din, Iraq

[Dated] 22 February 1993

Saddam Husayn Receives Nicaragua's Daniel Ortega

JN2502115793 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1040 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Baghdad, 25 Feb (INA)—President Saddam Husayn today received Daniel Ortega, leader of the Sandinist National Liberation Front and former president of Nicaragua, and his wife. The meeting was attended by Tariq 'Aziz, member of the Revolution Command Council, and George Hallaq, Nicaraguan ambassador to the Middle East and Greece [name and title as received].

Barzan al-Tikriti Appointed Adviser To Saddam

JN2402151493 Baghdad INA in English 1315 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Baghdad. Feb. 24, INA—A republican decree was issued on Tuesday appointing Mr. Barzan Ibrahim al-Tikriti, political adviser to the president of the Republic.

Mr. Barzan al-Tikriti before his appointment was Iraq's delegate to the U.N. mission in Geneva.

Rabin, Christopher Interviewed After Meeting

TA2402182193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1719 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Post-meeting news conference by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at the Prime Minister's office in Jerusalem—live in English]

[Excerpts] [Rabin] Mr. Secretary of State of the United States, his colleagues, ladies and gentlemen of the media. We more than appreciate the decision of President Clinton and the secretary of state to have the first visit of the secretary of state after President Clinton took the office of the President of the United States to come to the Middle East with the purpose to bring about the resumption of the peace negotiations. I believe that the visit of the secretary of state, the discussions, the talks that were held now in Israel no doubt will serve as a landmark in the relationship between our two countries, in the efforts to invigorate the peace negotiations and to bring their resumption.

I believe that during the visit of the secretary of state here, in Israel, I had the opportunity and the pleasure to have talks deep to the issues, and I hope that my assumption that we succeeded to establish special relations, relations of friendship, understanding, and candidness. [sentence as heard] I believe that in the talks that were held here we discussed a variety of issues, first and foremost what has to be done to bring about the resumption of the peace negotiations; how to make sure that once they will resume, they'll lead in 1993 to results, results that I believe all the peoples, all the countries of this region expect them to achieve. It is to say, to have a breakthrough that will lead to peace between Israel and each neighboring country and the Palestinians.

I hope and I believe that the visit of the secretary of state—not only to Israel, but also to the other capitals of the Arab countries that are directly involved in the peace negotiations and the other—will create a new atmosphere in the region, an atmosphere that will be conducive to bring about more meaningful peace negotiations. We have discussed at length the special relations between the United States and Israel, and I have no doubt in my mind that these relations will be developed and strengthened in the interest of the two countries and, no doubt, these developments will bring about and will facilitate many things that we together tried to achieve in this region.

Mr. Secretary, thank you very much for your patience, your readiness to listen, to travel, to see. I believe that we have put on you quite a burden of work during the two days that you stayed in Israel. Allow me through you to send my thanks and congratulations to President Clinton about his decision to give such a high priority to solve the difficulties that prevented till now the achievement of the peace negotiations. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary. [passage omitted with Christopher's statement]

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr. Prime Minister, do you regard deportation as an exception to Israeli policy, as the foreign minister has stated, and is Israel prepared to speed up the processing of the paperwork of those who had been deported?

[Rabin] Allow me to refer you to my statement on the day that the cabinet took the decision. In my statement in the Knesset I made it clear that the temporary removal or the deportation of the 400 leaders, instigators, organizers of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] is unprecedented and an exception. I stated it in the past, and I can only reiterate what I said when these decisions were taken. I believe that there is understanding about what will be done. As you know, Israel has agreed to certain elements. They are known. There are, of course, elements which are not known: What the review committee will decide, or if they will appeal to the committees of appeal. Therefore, there are certain issues that I can't give you details. They will not change dramatically the situation. [Passage omitted]

Christopher Talks, Local Reactions Noted

TA2502095993 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 25 Feb 93 p 3

[Report by Amnon Barzilay]

[Text] An announcement on the resumption of the peace talks will be released within days or weeks, Secretary of State Warren Christopher said yesterday after his meeting with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, which marked the end of his Middle East tour. A senior Israeli element said yesterday that conditions are ripe for the resumption of talks. At the same time, the element listed a series of outstanding problems. One of these is the Palestinian demand to resolve the deportee dilemma and to raise the level of representation.

Israel and the United States were surprised at the Palestinians' uncompromising stand on the deportee issue. Political sources said yesterday that there was a sense following the talks that PLO head Yasir 'Arafat wants to prove that he is the key factor. This was evident when the Palestinians informed Christopher that they will have to meet with 'Arafat before they can give definite replies.

One of the toughest controversial points was the Palestinian demand that Israel announce publicly that it will never again resort to the punitive policy of deporting residents of the territories. Following arduous U.S.-Israeli negotiations on this question, Rabin adamantly refused to modify the Israeli stand by renouncing deportation as a punitive measure against Arab terrorists. In a talk with Christopher on 23 February, Rabin said he would be willing to consider allowing the return of old-time deportees provided the Palestinians announce their immediate return to the peace talks. At the same talk, which was held during dinner at Rabin's residence, Christopher asked Israel to offer immediate gestures to the Palestinians to enable the immediate renewal of talks.

A senior political element said yesterday that, despite the Palestinians' obstinacy, the Americans sensed they would like to resume the talks. He estimated that the talks will indeed be resumed immediately after Passover in April. Political sources said yesterday that even after Christopher's return to the United States, the administration will continue pressuring the Palestinians to lift their objection to the renewal of talks. The sources believed that if the Palestinians agree to return to the talks, the United States will exert greater pressure on Israel in a bid to secure gestures toward the Palestinians.

A political source said yesterday that 'Arafat is not only the key to the resumption of talks but the real victor in the imbroglio that followed the deportation. It is believed that, ironically, Israel may have inadvertently achieved its main objective in deporting the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists. Rabin stated at the time that the deportation was designed to strengthen moderate forces and destroy Hamas. It is now plain that the PLO and 'Arafat have indeed become the primary factor in the resumption of talks.

As for Christopher's use of the term "active partner" and its significance in the context of the U.S. role in the talks, the source emphasized that the United States will promote the talks but will definitely be neither arbitrator nor mediator [metavekh]. The political source stressed that what matters to Israel is that the negotiations retain their direct nature.

As for the deportation problem and its solutions, the United States and Israel have apparently agreed that there is no room to reopen the package deal and the understanding they had achieved. However, Christopher and his aides expect the review committee examining the deportees' dossiers to decide on the return of several dozen more deportees, in addition to the 101 approved by the government. It is believed that several dozen more—but no more than 50—will be returned in the coming days, after the committee headed by Brigadier General Uri Shoham, the Military Appeal Court deputy president, files its recommendations. It is believed that an announcement on the return of another quota of deportees will be made within a few days, and that it will be one of the components in the Palestinian decision to return to the peace talks.

[A related report by Hemi Shalev and On Levi on page 1 of Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew on 25 February, adds: "Political sources in Jerusalem said yesterday that the Americans understand that Israel will be willing to go beyond the compromise agreement on the Hamas deportees by accelerating the return of deportees beyond the stipulations of that agreement. Sources in the prime minister's bureau have denied this report, saying there would be no deviation from the agreement."

[A report by Roni Shaqed on page 3 of Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew on 25 February adds that "East Jerusalem elements assess that the Palestinians will agree to attend the talks even without securing the return of the deportees, provided a process is created guaranteeing their eventual return, and provided the Americans stand by the proposals they have made in their talks here."]

Deputy Foreign Minister Views Christopher Talks

TA2502101493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0805 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Telephone interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin by correspondent Razi Barqay; from the "It's All Talk" program—live]

[Text] [Barqay] How is U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher leaving Israel?

[Beilin] He leaves Israel knowing us better, having met—perhaps for the first time—most of the key protagonists in the region, and with the hope that the talks will resume in April despite all the difficulties.

[Barqay] Knowing us better sounds more like he is leaving empty-handed.

[Beilin] No, at least that is not the way he feels. Some of his aides told me this morning that they believe that it will be possible to resume the talks as planned—that is, in the second half of April—despite the anticipated difficulties.

[Barqay] Do you agree that the main problem is the deportee issue?

[Beilin] The main problem is the participation of the Palestinians, to be more precise. In other words, the Arab countries—such as Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon—do not link the question of the deportees to the resumption of the talks. However, there is a link, created by the Palestinians, between their own participation and that of the Arab countries. The question is whether we can reach an accord that will ultimately make the Palestinians realize that past agreements and decisions are actually compatible with the Security Council resolution. In fact, that is what the discussions are all about at the moment.

[Barqay] In an interview I recorded a few minutes ago—which we will soon broadcast—Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi implies, without going into detail, that the deportee issue is not an insurmountable obstacle. My question to you is: Is her optimism due to some kind of gesture you offered to the Palestinians?

[Beilin] I do not think so. The truth is that they raised with the United States a series of demands regarding daily life in the territories. I believe some of them may definitely be discussed; this does not contradict our policy. On the contrary, I believe some of their demands could be met, and this may ultimately facilitate their participation in the talks.

[Barqay] I speak of gestures involving the deportees.

[Beilin] No, I do not think there has been any change in our policy on this issue. We have announced that our agreement with the United States on the Security Council resolution was final.

[Barqay] I am talking about a gesture such as shortening the duration of their exile from nine to four months.

[Beilin] I do not think such a move is at stake.

[Barqay] From where does her optimism come?

[Beilin] That is the sort of question you should have addressed to her, but this is a moot point seeing that the interview has already been recorded. I truly think that the Palestinians are the problem at the moment and not the deportees.

[Barqay] To sum up, you believe the talks will resume in Washington in the second half of April.

[Beilin] I said the United States believes that. I do not have the tools to make such an assessment myself. I can only hope. What I can say is that at the end of the visit, after meeting Arab and Israeli leaders and a few hours before Christopher's meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev, the United States thinks that it will eventually be able to issue invitations for talks to be held sometime in mid-April.

[Barqay] My last question pertains to the Syrian issue: Did the political level send the deputy chief of staff to brief U.S. journalists as part of your campaign to reconcile Israeli and U.S. public opinion to the possibility of a withdrawal from the Golan Heights?

[Beilin] No, I do not think so. First, I am personally not involved in this issue. I actually read the transcript of his remarks and the reactions to it in the press, and what the Army is actually saying is that its duty is to defend any border on which the politicians decide.

[Barqay] However, it is also its duty to tell the political level that it is impossible or very hard to defend such a border.

[Beilin] There is no such thing as impossible. It may be harder or require more equipment and troops, but the Army cannot say it cannot defend it. The Army did not say that about the boundaries of the 1947 partition plan, the post-Independence War boundaries, the 1956 Sinai campaign borders, or the 1967 borders, and will not say as much about any territorial compromise to be attained in the future. It can only say that it will be more difficult and that it will need better means. This is what I understand from the transcript of the deputy chief of staff's remarks published in this morning's papers. It is not that he was sent to the battlefront or used as a trial balloon. What he said is what the Army has been saying all along and what the Army should say.

[Barqay] Yosi Beilin, thank you very much.

Sheves Notes 'Progress' During Christopher Visit

TA2502112893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Shim'on Sheves, director general of the Prime Minister's Office, has said that the United States will not resume the dialogue with the PLO and will not change the format of the Madrid conference. Interviewed on the noon newsreel, Sheves said that during U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit progress was made on the substance, atmosphere, and feeling. He added that the understandings reached between Israel and the Americans and those between Washington and the Palestinians do not affect Israel's security or political interests.

Rabin Says Christopher Tour Brought Talks Closer

TA2502122893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Arriving at a gala luncheon of the Federation of Insurance Companies at the Hilton Hotel in Tel Aviv, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said: There is an understanding with the United States that all the deportees in Lebanon will be allowed to return to Israel by the end of this year. This is my position, Rabin told reporters, adding that he does not yet know when the peace talks will resume. Our correspondent Meron Tzur brings us a short excerpt of the prime minister's remarks:

[Begin recording] [Rabin] I do not know what the talk is all about. In my opinion, the most important thing is to resume the peace negotiations. Peace negotiations should resume because all the negotiating parties are interested in their resumption. Making peace is not an act of charity. It should stem from the wish of all the sides to solve the problem and the conflict. The only way to solve it is around the negotiating table.

[Tzur] The prime minister was asked when the talks are expected to resume.

[Rabin] I am awaiting the Americans' reply on the issue. I have reason to believe that the negotiations will definitely resume, but this is not yet absolutely certain. At the same time, I look ahead with faith that the negotiations will resume.

[Tzur] Another question to the prime minister was: Has U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit facilitated the resumption of the negotiations?

[Rabin] I am convinced that Secretary Christopher's visit to the Arab countries—those directly involved in the negotiations and those indirectly involved—his meetings with the Palestinians and with us have brought closer the chance of resuming the peace negotiations.

[Tzur] So, where is the ball now, correspondents asked him.

[Rabin, in English] Where is the ball? In the air. [end recording]

Officials Assess Christopher Trip, Chance of Talks

TA2502061293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Telephone interview with Professor Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador to the United States and head of the delegation to talks with Syria, by correspondent Shalom Qital—live]

[Text] [Qital] Will the talks resume in April?

[Rabinovich] There is no certainty. I believe there is a good chance of the talks resuming in April.

[Qital] Warren Christopher told members of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations [CPMAJO] yesterday that there will be a breakthrough in 1993—that is, within the next nine months—and that sounds very optimistic.

[Rabinovich] It sounds optimistic, indeed. I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the secretary of state saw fit to meet the CPMAJO members during his visit to Israel. This was a gesture typical of the rest of the visit and of the current administration and secretary of state, and I think it was good.

[Qital] How does one bridge the Israeli Government's position on the deportees, the Palestinian position, and other problems? How can one expect a breakthrough?

[Rabinovich] I think one should consider the fact that everybody wants to resume the talks—that is, the United States, Israel, and—so we are told—the Arab countries. In fact, the impression of the people who talked with the Palestinians was that they, too, want to come to the talks. Therefore, if all those who are scheduled to participate in the talks actually want to attend, bridging the gaps will not be as arduous as it may look.

[Qital] Is everything geared toward the meeting between President Clinton and Prime Minister Rabin in the White House in approximately three weeks? Will the festive announcement be made then?

[Rabinovich] I do not think that is the case. Both the Americans and the Israelis would like the meeting to dwell on other issues rather than on how to go about resuming the talks, which is actually a technical question.

[Qital] What do you think should be done in the next few weeks to restart the process?

[Rabinovich] I think the elements of a solution are all there and merely need to be activated. I think the main onus is on the Arab countries—which share the Arab side of the table with the Palestinians and should therefore influence and perhaps even make it plain to them that they are not willing to subjugate their wishes to a Palestinian veto—and on the Palestinians. I think the main onus is on their side.

[Qital] Finally, I would like to ask you about the personal angle, about personal styles. Whenever a new president or secretary of state comes into office, he is put under the microscope to see whether he is sympathetic to Israel or whether there is chemistry between him and Israel's leaders. How did Christopher's visit impress you?

[Rabinovich] I do not think we weighed the question of whether Secretary Christopher is sympathetic to Israel. As for personal style, he is a low-key and introverted person but very pleasant. As to whether he is a secretary of state who wants to work with Israel and wants to conduct an active policy in the Middle East, the answer is yes. You mentioned chemistry, so I will tell you that there was chemistry between him and the Israeli leaders he met. I think he expressed it very clearly in his remarks at the impromptu news conference yesterday. I think there is overall satisfaction with the visit, the secretary's personality, and the style of the team working with him.

[Qital] Thank you very much.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 0500 GMT on 25 February reports: "An official source in Jerusalem says the gap between Israel's position and that of the Palestinians on renewal of the bilateral talks is not wide. The source told our political reporter, Jack Katzenell, the contacts on the Palestinians' returning to the negotiating table are at an advanced stage and, for this reason, few details can be disclosed. Another source said Israel would be willing to make further gestures to get the Palestinians to return to the talks, including allowing veteran deportees to return home. All this emerged at Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher yesterday, after the secretary's talks with the Palestinians."

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0500 GMT on 25 February adds that "upon the end of Secretary Christopher's tour of the Middle East, Israeli political sources assessed that his talks did not actually yield any achievements."]

Rabin Government Urged To Meet U.S. 'Halfway'

TA2102130793 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 21 Feb 93 p 2

[Editorial: "Meeting the United States Halfway"]

[Text] Only one thing will be considered a real achievement by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher: If he can announce at the end of his visit to the region that the peace talks would be resuming in mid-April with the participation of all the sides.

The way things look on the eve of his arrival in Jerusalem, such an achievement is still beyond his reach. Cairo is pressing to resume the talks; Damascus, too, is willing

in principle; Amman is ready to attend already tomorrow. Only the PLO-Tunis is still scared, afraid of the revenge of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. And, as long as it does not budge, Damascus—not to mention Amman—will continue to hesitate.

Warren Christopher is in a bind. On the one hand he undertook to stand behind the package deal with the Israeli prime minister which ostensibly ended the affair of the deportees. On the other hand, he realizes that he failed to take into account the intensity of the all-Arab demand to allow the return of all the deportees. What is more, in order to strengthen President Clinton's stature in the world, he must ensure the continuation of the peace process.

This being the case, the Rabin government must act wisely, its utmost goal being to avert a collapse of the process. It must meet halfway the Clinton administration which stood by us in the Security Council, prevented sanctions against us, and wants—just as we do—to promote peace.

If the prime minister thinks likewise, he is bound to find a way to make it easier for the United States to prevent a blow to the President's prestige and to ensure the continuation of our good relations. Rabin is bound to do that, even without pressures. Perhaps not today, but definitely before his arrival in Washington next month.

Rabin Letter to Clinton Given to Christopher

TA2502120793 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 25 Feb 93 pp 1, 17

[Report by political correspondent Shim'on Schiffer]

[Excerpt] In a letter to U.S. President Bill Clinton, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin calls for the main effort upon the resumption of the peace negotiations to be placed on striving for an accord between Israel and Syria.

Last night Rabin handed over his letter, in reply to the U.S. President's message, to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. The latter ended his tour of the Middle East this morning and left for Geneva to confer with his Russian counterpart.

In his letter, Rabin agrees with Clinton that future action in the peace effort should be taken "with Syria first." The prime minister nevertheless notes that the negotiations on the Palestinian track should not be neglected.

Rabin explains to the U.S. President that Israel does not plan to elaborate on its willingness to withdraw from territories in the Golan Heights before it gets details from Syria about "the substance of the peace with Israel." The prime minister believes Secretary Christopher did not bring any details from his talks in Damascus that may throw light on what Syria means when it declares that it will be willing to compromise with Israel in the political negotiations if Israel declares its willingness for a full withdrawal from the Golan.

The prime minister dwells on the need to adhere to the negotiating framework determined in the Madrid conference. He welcomes the U.S. decision to play a more active role than in the past in the negotiations, but cautions that the Arab countries might construe this as a substitute for direct negotiations, and they must be told that this is not so.

Rabin thanks Clinton for his announcement that the new U.S. Administration will make an effort to promote an arrangement between Israel and its neighbors, and particularly for his announcement that he intends to strengthen the strategic partnership between the United States and Israel. [passage omitted]

Prime Minister Spokesman Denies 'Peace Map' Exists

TA2502072193 Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew 25 Feb 93 p 1

[Text] The prime minister's media adviser has categorically denied the report published in the most recent issue of THE JERUSALEM REPORT concerning a "peace map," which the prime minister and the foreign minister have allegedly drawn up to present at the upcoming meeting with President Clinton. This is a groundless report, and all its details are imaginary and unfounded.

Senior Source on Pending Palestinian Issues

TA2402211893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2100 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Upon the conclusions the discussions U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher held in Israel, a senior Israeli source said that there are three issues which need additional discussion: the matter of the deportees; the Palestinian delegation's inability to make decisions; and the Palestinian demand that the level of their representation be changed. The senior Israeli source said, however, that these issues are wrinkles that can be smoothed out.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that the senior source further said that Israel is ready to take additional confidence-building steps to improve the Palestinian's standard of living. These steps will be taken if the peace talks are resumed.

'Official' Says Gap With Palestinians 'Not Wide'

TA2502061793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] An official source in Jerusalem says the gap between Israel's position and that of the Palestinians on renewal of the bilateral talks is not wide. The source told our political reporter Jack Katzenell the contacts on the Palestinians' returning to the negotiating table are at an advanced stage and, for this reason, few details can be disclosed.

Another source said Israel would be willing to make further gestures to get the Palestinians to return to the talks, including allowing veteran deportees to return home.

All this emerged at Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher yesterday, after the secretary's talks with the Palestinians.

'Senior' Source Says Issues Can Be 'Smoothed Out'

TA2402211893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2100 GMT 24 Feb 93

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Palestinians 'Interested in Restarting Peace Process'

TA2402204693 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 2030 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] The Palestinians are interested in restarting the peace process, and the conditions for this move are ripe. This remark was made this evening by a senior Israeli source who attended the discussions with the Americans. According to the source, the Palestinians are systematically trying to introduce changes in the conditions for and the framework of the talks, which makes their resumption difficult. The source made clear that no Israeli or joint U.S.-Israeli document was presented to the Palestinians, but he noted that Israel was and still is interested in taking confidence-building steps toward the Palestinians in the territories.

Netanyahu Reports Rabin Plan for Golan Withdrawal

TA2402125893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Likud Knesset member [MK] Binyamin Netanyahu says he has knowledge of a plan emerging in talks between Prime Minister Rabin and his American interlocutors regarding a full withdrawal from the Golan.

MK Netanyahu contends that in the first stage, Israel will declare its willingness to withdraw from the entire Golan. In the second stage, it will make a partial withdrawal, and U.S. troops will be stationed in areas evacuated by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]. In the third stage, Netanyahu asserts, the IDF will withdraw entirely from the Golan Heights.

Poll Indicates Most Support Territorial Compromise

TA2302152493 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 23 Feb 93 p 1

[Report by On Levi]

[Text] Most Israelis are very interested in peace, but differ in their opinions regarding the Arabs' desire to achieve it. Although Israelis still view Arab aspirations as negative and hostile, they believe that peace is more possible now than at any point in time since the Gulf war. Israelis also consider the likelihood of war as low. These are the results of a survey conducted by the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University.

According to the survey, 46 percent of the respondents would refuse to give back any part of the Golan Heights, 33 percent would return a small part, 15 percent would return a large part, and 6 percent would give back all the Golan Heights. The government's policy in the territories is perceived as too soft and the people are extremely concerned about their personal safety.

The survey is based on a representative sample of the adult Jewish population, not including Kibbutz members and residents of the territories. The survey was carried out at the beginning of January this year.

Almost all the respondents are interested in reaching peace, but differ regarding the question of how much the Arabs also want it. Fifty-eight percent believe that the Arabs are greatly or somewhat interested in reaching peace, while 95 percent believed that the Israelis sought peace.

Support for the continuation of the peace process was expressed by 89 percent of the respondents, with only 11 percent voicing their opposition. Eighty-two percent claimed that they followed the peace process with great interest, while only 5 percent reported indifference.

The trend toward greater moderation on territorial compromise and the establishment of a Palestinian state continues. Twenty-nine percent supported the establishment of autonomy, 20 percent supported the return of most of the territories to Jordan in return for a peace treaty, 13 percent would accept the establishment of a Palestinian state in the framework of a peace treaty. On the other hand, 13 percent supported the annexation of the territories and a transfer of the Arab population, while 13 percent were in favor of annexing the territories without carrying out a population transfer. The latter, however, asserted that the Arab population should not be awarded any civil rights. Six percent were in favor of maintaining the status quo.

Some 85 percent are concerned they could be attacked by Arab terrorists. Some 75 percent of the interviewees believe that the intifadah and terrorism can be liquidated by military action. the prevalent feeling is that government policy for maintaining calm in the territories is too soft; this feeling has become much stronger as compared to previous years: approximately 60 percent believe government policy to be too soft, whereas 30 percent assess government policy as correct and 10 percent maintain the government's policy is too tough.

Of the sample, 72 percent supported the idea that all sides, including Israel, discard their nonconventional weapons, and eliminate the Arab countries' nonconventional capability in exchange for discarding Israel's chemical and biological weapons [as published].

According to the survey, 35 percent believe that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is weaker than it was in the past. Based on the survey, the IDF's power has eroded over the years—10 percent believe that the IDF is much weaker than previously. On the other hand Israelis are confident in their ability to confront Syria in war, to overcome terrorism and an uprising of Israeli Arabs, to withstand a cut in U.S. aid and undergo war against all Arab countries.

The survey also determines that Labor is considered more capable of ensuring real peace and democracy than the Likud. The Likud is deemed more capable of securing a Jewish majority and territories, and of maintaining calm and order in the territories.

These results constitute a dramatic change from a survey conducted in 1991, in which the Likud led in all categories. If elections were held today, the margin between Labor and the Likud would have been minimal. Some 32 percent would support Labor and 31 Likud. Meretz enjoyed the support of 11 percent, and Tzomet received 9 percent.

Army Closes Down 2 Gaza Universities for 1 Week

TA2402202893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] The security forces decided to close down the Islamic College and the al-Azhar College in Gaza for one week in the wake of processions held by armed masked youths there today. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers searched all those who left the colleges to ascertain they were unarmed. After most of the students left the campuses, the IDF soldiers entered the premises and conducted searches, during which they fired shots and threw a fragmentation grenade, but nobody was hurt.

Six plastic rifles, equipment used by masked youths and inciting materials were found during the searches. Several suspects were detained.

Arrow Test Launch Postponed After 'Malfunction'

TA2502052993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] The test launch of the Arrow missile scheduled for yesterday was postponed due to a last minute malfunction. Officials at the Israel Aircraft Industry [IAI] said the test, during which the missile is to be fired at another missile in midair, might be conducted today. Sources at IAI said more test launches are expected.

Rabin Meets Likud Chairman, Defends Shahaq

TA2402132993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] The prime minister has promised that he will be extra careful in seeing to it that military men are not asked to defend a government policy, if it is politically disputed. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that Mr. Rabin made the promise to Likud Knesset Faction Chairman Moshe Qatzav in a discussion the two held about the remarks attributed to Deputy Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq. The prime minister said that he was not aware of the briefing. Mr. Rabin said he has full confidence in the deputy chief of staff, after his bureau clarified that Major General Shahaq's remarks were misquoted. The government's stand regarding the negotiations with Syria is fixed, clear, and has not changed, Rabin said.

Outcome, 'Success' of Christopher Tour Welcomed

JN2502105593 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 25 Feb 93 pp 1, 22

[Editorial: "The Talks' Success Is More Important Than Just Their Resumption"]

[Text] Apparently, the mission of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has realized some of the progress which one had hoped would be achieved as the tour began. It also seems that his intensive talks with the Israelis and Palestinians over the past two days have opened the door for a possible resumption of direct negotiations, about which an announcement is expected after the U.S. secretary returns home.

Based on a commitment to the cause of peace and our belief in the need not to squander a rare and historic opportunity to establish a just and comprehensive settlement in the Middle East, we welcome in principle every effort to achieve such an objective, for which the people of the region aspire. We also welcome any detente that would help reactivate the peace process.

Despite the fact that what Christopher has achieved during his intensive talks with the Israelis and Palestinians over the past two days does not meet the expectations one had on the eve of the tour, especially in terms of forcing Israel to implement UN Security Council Resolution 242, the fact that the U.S. secretary of state has managed to reopen the road to resuming the peace process constitutes a success welcome to all parties concerned with the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Although we realize the importance of removing the obstacle which Israel recently placed in the path of peace—the issue of the 400 Palestinian deportees—at the same time we understand that there is a long series of Israeli obstacles already in place along that same path. These Israeli obstacles envelop the U.S. diplomatic breakthrough to return all the parties to the negotiating table with various threats, unless they are all tackled and overcome at the right time.

We initially view with satisfaction what Warren Christopher has achieved during the Israeli leg of his tour, in terms of finding a solution to the deportee crisis that is acceptable to the Palestinian negotiating team. This, however, will not distract us from our real interest in the need for the U.S. sponsor, who has now assumed the role of a full partner, to effectively and seriously deal with all the obstacles that are still blocking the path to real progress in the talks when they resume under U.S. sponsorship, and even under the nose of the Americans, who have been acting as spectators for the past one and half years of talks.

DPRK Delegation Expresses Solidarity, Departs

JN1902204393 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 19 Feb 93

[Excerpt] Yang Hyong-sop, chairman of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly, has expressed his country's support for and solidarity with Jordan's efforts to achieve Arab solidarity, as well as its support for the Palestinian people's just cause.

This came in an exclusive interview with the Jordan news agency before departing Amman for Damascus within the framework of a regional tour, during which he visited Iran, Pakistan, and Jordan with the aim of promoting parliamentary relations between the DPRK and these states, as well as expanding cultural cooperation. [passage omitted]

Group Returns From CIS Islamic States, Russia

JN2002200493 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Excerpt] His Majesty King Husayn was on hand to receive a Jordanian delegation returning from a visit to the CIS Islamic member states and the Russian Federation. The delegation was led by Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Bin-Zayd.

The delegation was also received upon arrival by Dr. Khalid al-Karaki, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court; Foreign Minister Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir; and the secretary general of the Royal Hashemite Court. [passage omitted]

Prince Hasan Ends Europe Tour, Returns Home

JN2102165193 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Excerpt] His Majesty King Husayn received His Highness Crown Prince Hasan and Her Highness Princess Tharwat al-Hasan upon their return this afternoon at the end of a tour of France, Italy, and Britain. [passage omitted]

Interior Ministry Licenses 15th Political Party

JN2102111293 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 18 Feb 93 pp 28, 22

[By Musa Hawamidah]

[Excerpts] Interior Minister Jawdat al-Subul yesterday licensed the Unionist Arab Democratic Party [al-hizb al-wahdawi al-'arabi al-dimuqrati] in implementation of the Political Parties Law No. 32 for 1992. Thus, no nationalist, leftist, or religious party has been denied recognition. With the legalization of this party, the number of licensed parties rises to 15. [passage omitted]

In a statement to AL-DUSTUR after learning of the Interior Ministry's decision to license his party, Anis al-Mu'ashshir, secretary general of the Unionist Arab Democratic Party, said: We hope this license will be a positive step toward serving democracy and realizing its aims by building Jordan and upholding the nation's causes. We will always seek to unify the nationalist line in Jordan out of our conviction that unifying parties that have similar ideas, pillars, and backgrounds will provide better chances for the success of the democratic process in the service of the homeland. [passage omitted]

Deportees' Spokesman Comments on Current Situation

Calls For Withdrawal From Talks

NC2402164793 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] The deportees have praised the stand of the Palestinian delegation that met the U.S. secretary of state in Jerusalem.

Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi, spokesman for the deportees, has called for withdrawal from the negotiations and criticized the occupation forces' terrorist measures. He said Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] is united and that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin is not a man of peace.

Our correspondent Suhayl Abu-Fa'ur in al-Biqa' reports: [Begin Abu-Fa'ur recording] Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi, spokesman for the deportees, held a news conference this morning at which he praised the Palestinian delegation's stance and Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi's statements. He said the Palestinian delegation's step must be followed by other steps toward complete withdrawal from the negotiations. He said the occupation authorities practice all forms of terrorism against the Palestinian people, such as demolishing houses, killing children, [words indistinct], and curfews, and that all these measures are reason enough to withdraw from the talks.

Commenting on Christopher's tour, al-Rantisi said it will have been a waste of time if it does not lead to the deportees' immediate return to their homes. He added: I am confident that the Arab position will not allow negotiations to resume before the deportees return.

He praised the British stance and said that Europe, particularly Britain, France, Sweden, and (?Italy) [words indistinct], is firm and supports the implementation of Resolution 799 [words indistinct] and that the U.S.-Israeli deal [words indistinct].

Answering a question on a statement by one of Christopher's aides that the ball is now in the Israeli court, al-Rantisi said the ball had actually been in the Zionist enemy's court since the day we were expelled from our homes [words indistinct]. He said the enemy should reverse its decision so as to solve the problem, because the deportees' decision is firm, no matter how long they remain in south Lebanon.

Al-Rantisi said Rabin is not a man of peace and that he implements the Zionist policy of expansion into the Arab countries until the Israeli dream of an Israel from the Nile to the Euphrates is realized. He said he does not believe Israel has any credibility in the peace process.

Commenting on [words indistinct] the existence of two factions within Hamas, he said: I would like to assure Hamas' enemies and friends that Hamas is different from other movements; there can be no factions within Hamas. He said Hamas' loyalty is to God, not to any country, although it strongly respects every country.

To the world, he said that it is obvious the Security Council adopts double standards, yet, despite this, there is still hope that the Security Council will meet [words indistinct] firm resolution to force the enemy to rescind its decision. He added: I fear that if the situation continues long, the Security Council will be buried, just like its credibility.

Dr. 'Umar Farawinah spoke to our radio about the deportees' health. He said: We have a good medical team but we lack medicine and material resources in general. Conditions here are detrimental to general health, such as [words indistinct] and cold weather at night. This [words indistinct] the doctors to be continuously cautious.

Dr. Farawinah said that each day around 40-60 get sick and that most of their complaints are about the cold. He added: We are trying to control these cases but what we fear most are emergencies about which we can do nothing.

[Passage indistinct] before we leave this place. On cases being treated by the camp's doctors [words indistinct], Dr. Farawinah said: There are [words indistinct] isolated villages in a similar situation to ours. No one has access to them. Hospitals and doctors are far from these villages; we are nearest to them. Should they come to us, we will serve them. What we can offer the neighboring villages will not equal [words indistinct]. This is Suhayl Abu-Fa'ur handing you back to the Voice of the Mountain. [end recording].

We apologize for the poor line.

Rejects Phased Return, Linkage

JN2502091193 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 25 Feb 93 p 18

[Interview with 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi, spokesman for the Palestinian deportees, by Amin Mustafa in Marj al-Zuhur in southern Lebanon; date not given]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Mustafa] Israel has proposed to return 101 deportees and shorten the sentence of the others. It has informed the UN Security Council of this proposal and said this was coordinated with the United States. What is your reaction?

[Al-Rantisi] Very plainly, I say I reject any division of the issue. There should either be a collective return or no return at all. We have specified the focal point of our conflict with the Israelis, and in light of this fact we can know if the deportation dossier will remain open; the Israelis assert that it will, and we endeavor to close it once and for all. Regarding attempts to circumvent that subject and link it to other issues, these acts are unacceptable and rejected.

The new U.S. secretary of state is trying to adopt and market the Israeli position. We advise him not to go too far in his illusions or waste much time. We urge him to implement UN Security Council Resolution 799, which is completely fair. On this occasion, we must reaffirm that we will not leave this spot for anywhere except our country, homes, and families. There is no land, regardless of its status, more sacred or precious than our own land. [passage omitted]

Calls Christopher Tour 'Failure'

NC2502131093 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] The Palestinian deportees have described U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour of the region as a failure because it did not achieve their immediate return.

'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi, spokesman for the deportees, commented on the statement by Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan 'Ashrawi, in which she said that Christopher's proposals on resolving the deportees issue merit attention. Al-Rantisi said: If 'Ashrawi, who knows our stand, is optimistic, I expect the proposals to correspond with the deportees' stand.

Cabinet Discusses Christopher Visit, Talks

NC2402130693 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1157 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Statement by Acting Information Minister Muhsin Dallul after cabinet meeting on 24 February—recorded]

[Excerpt] At the beginning of the meeting, the prime minister and the foreign minister reviewed the outcome of the meetings held with the U.S. secretary of state and his delegation. The talks with the U.S. delegation focused on the assurances previously made by the United States to Lebanon. These assurances include U.S. support for Lebanese sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity within internationally recognized borders. The talks also dealt with the efforts to ensure Israeli withdrawal from all occupied territories in accordance with Security Council Resolution 425.

The cabinet was also briefed on the U.S. commitment to the bases of the [peace] conference and the role that the United States has defined for itself since the start of the peace conference—an active role that will move the negotiations from their current deadlock—to ensure the implementation of the UN resolutions and the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

The cabinet discussed the U.S. Administration's readiness to promote relations between the two countries in various fields.

The cabinet then discussed the topics on its weekly agenda. [passage omitted]

'U.S. Intervention' in Internal Affairs Criticized

NC2402145393 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Excerpts] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri has attacked U.S. intervention in Lebanon's internal affairs and implicitly criticized the Lebanese Government for continuing high prices and delays in administrative appointments.

After a meeting with President Ilyas al-Hirawi, he said: I briefed the president on my visit to Syria and meetings there, particularly the Arab Parliamentary Union council meeting in the next two months. We also reviewed the internal situation. [passage omitted]

Commenting on Christopher's tour, Birri asked: Because the visit to Lebanon was scheduled and known about eight days in advance, why do we fool our people? It was known that he would come and visit the Defense Ministry and see that the security situation in Lebanon is much better than that in some parts of the United States.

My principled stand on the negotiations has not changed. The situation appeared as if there was intervention in Lebanon's internal affairs. We should note this, especially as we did not hear the U.S. secretary mention Resolution 425. President al-Hirawi repeatedly mentioned the fundamental resolution. We brought him to extricate us from our enemies, but he came to see how he can extricate us from our friends and returned to the issue of Lebanese internal affairs. We would rather see the strong United States taking an interest in bigger issues, because, as Lebanese, we know how to deal with Lebanese issues.

Birri said the obstacle to the implementation of al-Ta'if Accord is the Israeli enemy's presence. He noted that all other issues, discussion of a constitutional council, socioeconomic council, and the Army's armament and backing, are proceeding normally.

Birri asked why aid has not been forthcoming and what the intentions behind this are. Replying to a question, he said: We cannot blame the government before we give it the necessary—and adequate—time. We notice reconstruction attempts and Prime Minister al-Hariri traveling from one country to another to secure aid. Al-Hariri's government has reduced the dollar exchange rate from 2,700 to approximately 1,400 pounds, a reduction of over a third, which should reflect on commodity prices.

Foreign Minister on Christopher Tour, Deportees

JN2402190793 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1735 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Interview with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' by Ahmad Birru in Paris on 24 February—recorded]

[Text] [Birru] Your Excellency Faruq al-Shar', after meeting with President Mitterrand yesterday, you mentioned that Christopher reaffirmed the Clinton administration's commitment to follow up on the peace process with the same previous interest, and indeed with more effectiveness than was the case during the Bush administration. The Israelis have said that they agree to an effective U.S. participation in the negotiations. What tangible evidence prompted you to draw this conclusion?

[Al-Shar'] The tangible evidence that prompted us to draw this conclusion was in the form of a written message signed by President Clinton to President Hafiz al-Asad. The message was handed to President al-Asad last Sunday during Christopher's meeting with him. You are aware that during the past eight rounds of bilateral talks, the Arab side always complained about the lack of U.S. interest and the Bush administration's failure to play an effective role during the bilateral peace talks. Now the current administration, whose interest in the peace process had been doubtful, just like that of the previous administration, is now affirming that it will be more concerned than the Bush administration and will exhibit discernible influence during the talks by taking an effective role with the negotiating sides.

[Birru] You spoke yesterday of the French role in the peace process. What French role does Syria expect in this process?

[Al-Shar'] France is an important European country and influential, particularly within the EC group. We also must not forget that France is a permanent member in the UN Security Council. This imposes on it special responsibilities toward the implementation of UN resolutions, whether those dealing with the basis of the peace process, or with respect to returning the deportees to their homes in accordance with Resolution 799.

[Birru] The French have intimated to the Syrians they wish they joined the mulitlateral talks. Has there been any shift in the Syrian position in this regard?

[Al-Shar'] There has been no change in the Syrian position, something the French know, which was why they did not raise the issue during my talks in Paris.

[Birru] Following Christopher's talks with Israeli officials, an Israeli official said the Golan Heights were not crucial to Israel's security and that the Israelis were optimistic about the prospects of an agreement with Syria. Are Israel and Syria likely to reach agreement on complete withdrawal from the Golan before one is reached with the other Arab parties?

[Al-Shar'] Irrespective of whether the Israelis think the Golan central or otherwise to their security, the occupied heights are an inseparable part of Syria, and all of the territory should be returned to Syria. The bottom line of the peace process that kicked off in Madrid is Israel's pullout from all occupied Arab land, including the Golan. We made plain to Christopher during his Damascus visit that Syria insists on Israel's withdrawal from all of the Golan.

[Birru] What about the occupied Palestlinian territory, is there a....

[Al-Shar', interrupting] We went into a comprehensive peace process based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 that demand an Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories and provide for the national rights of the Palestinian people.

[Birru] The Palestinians seem less than happy with their meeting yesterday with Christopher, especially insofar as a solution to the expellees' issue is concerned. In case this affair remains without a solution; where do you stand on a resumption of the talks?

[Al-Shar'] None of us is confomortable with a single expellee remaining outside of his home and homeland. We as Arabs insist on and demand the full implemention of UN Security Council Resolution 799 calling for the repatriation of all the expellees to their homes and families. It is wrong to assume that the Arab parties are divided on that issue. This applies especially to Syria, which insists on implementation of Resolution 799 and the return of all Palestinian expellees. At the same time, Syria adheres to the peace process that was launched to further the implemention of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, meaning an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories and the Palestinian people's attainment of their national independence. These two resolutions are more encompassing than the other relevant Security Council resolutions; however, all the council resolutions, including the one pertaining to the expellees are binding on Israel, under Article 25 of the UN Charter. We, therefore, do not differ on the need for the implementation of all Security Council resolutions pertaining to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian cause.

[Birru] Mr. Minister, judging by your statements as well as the statements made by French officials, it seems that French-Syrian ties are constantly improving. Indeed, they can be termed good. Can we say that these ties are now perfect?

[Al-Shar'] Of course, Syrian-French ties are improving. I am of the opinion that there can be no perfect relations among states. For our part, we are keen on promoting these ties in the interest of the two countries, Syria and France, and also in the interest of regional security and stability. The French side, as I was told by President Mitterrand and Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, is keen on promoting and enhancing Syrian-French ties in various spheres.

[Birru] Have you discussed Lebanese issues, such as the implementation of the al-Ta'if agreement, during your talks with French officials?

[Al-Shar'] The Lebanese issue was not discussed during the talks I held with President Mitterrand and Minister Dumas. However, during an informal talk, Minister Dumas spoke on the Lebanese issue. At any rate, we believe that the steps recently taken in Lebanon must be deemed satisfactory by all those who want to see an improvement in the Lebanese domestic situation.

[Birru] With respect to security in the Gulf, there is the Damascus Declaration signed by Egypt, Syria, and the Gulf states. In what way has the Syrian role contributed toward improving the security situation in the Gulf?

[Al-Shar'] It goes without saying that Syria is concerned for security and stability in the Gulf region, particularly since this region is extremely sensitive for purposes which are well known. In light of this, Syria has made all possible efforts to render inter-Arab ties relations marked by fraternity and strong cooperation, and also to normalize Arab-Iranian ties, given that Iran is a neighboring Islamic state. The objective was also to base Arab-Iranian relations on mutual respect and noninterference in domestic affairs. When this perspective is espoused, the attainment of security and stability in the Gulf becomes an achievable objective.

[Birru] Thank you.

[Al-Shar'] You are welcome.

Damascus Reports al-Shar' Statements

JN2502065893 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] In statements to Radio Monte Carlo and the BBC, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' has stressed that irrespective of whether or not the Israelis consider the Golan Heights central or otherwise to their security, the occupied Golan is Syrian territory and must be returned to Syria in its entirety.

Answering a question from Radio Monte Carlo, al-Shar' said: The objective of the peace process launched in Madrid is Israel's pullout from all occupied Arab territory, including the Golan Heights. We made it clear to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher that Syria insists on complete Israeli withdrawal from the Golan.

Al-Shar' said: We entered a comprehensive peace process based on Resolutions 242 and 338, which both demand Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territory and provide for the national rights of the Palestinian people. The foreign minister added that the current U.S. Administration will be more effective during the talks because it is committed to play an effective role with the negotiating delegations. Al-Shar' added that U.S. President Clinton spoke about his administration's commitment to revive the peace process and implement Resolutions 242 and 338. Clinton, al-Shar' said, also reiterated the pledges made by the Bush administration to the Arab parties.

Al-Shar' stressed that the issue of the Palestinian expellees constitutes an obstacle because the Security Council resolution on this issue, like other resolutions, should be respected. He said that the peace process requires the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and consequently Resolution 799, which falls within the framework of the many resolutions that have not been implemented by Israel and which must be honored.

Asked if Syria would go to the bilateral peace talks along with the Jordanians and the Lebanese, but without the Palestinians, al-Shar' said: What is proposed is not the absence of the Palestinians, because we, as one Arab party, are holding bilateral talks to exchange opinions, hold consultations, and make appropriate decisions to serve our just cause.

World Awaiting Next U.S. Move on Peace Talks

JN2502080893 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 25 Feb 93

[From the press review]

[Text] In its editorial today, AL-BA'TH newspaper says: Contrary to what has taken place in the Arab countries—where U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher was optimistic that the peace talks would soon resume—the U.S. secretary has said, in the wake of his third meeting with [Israeli Prime Minister] Rabin, that there are still obstacles that should be removed before the peace talks are resumed. AL-BA'TH asks: Where are these obstacles and who is responsible for them?

AL-BA'TH says: The Arab side does not constitute an obstacle. It has become clear that the problem, in fact the obstacle, is represented by the Israeli position which has not shifted toward advancing the peace process and achieving a just and comprehensive peace in accordance with pertinent international resolutions.

AL-BA'TH adds: Christopher's emphasis on the existence of obstacles, in comments following his final meeting with the Israeli prime minister yesterday, is enough to affirm that the Israeli position on the peace process has not changed. This position is represented by absolute rejection of any commitment to international resolutions.

Concluding its comment, AL-BA'TH says: The most important point here is that everything has become clear to the American side, which has now pledged to become a full partner in the peace process. However, what we want to say is that we, along with the whole world, are

waiting to see what the United States will do to revive the peace process, as the Clinton administration has affirmed.

Christopher Fails To Persuade al-Asad on Talks

PM2502095093 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 24 Feb 93 p3

[Unattributed report: "Syria Not Yet Persuaded To Participate in Multilateral Negotiations"]

[Text] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Arab sources in Cairo have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has failed to persuade Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to authorize Syrian participation in the next round of multilateral negotiations.

The sources said that Syria reaffirmed its position refusing to attend the multilateral negotiations and linking participation to tangible progress in the bilateral negotiations with Israel on the Golan and the signing of a settlement agreement between the two sides.

The same sources said that Syria told Christopher that it would be difficult to conclude bilateral or collective agreements on regional cooperation in the Middle East between the Arab states and Israel before a political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict is achieved, adding that the United States is requested to concentrate its efforts on boosting the bilateral negotiations.

The sources further said that Christopher asked Egyptian President Husni Mubarak to try to persuade Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to allow Syrian participation in the multilateral negotitions in the context of Egyptian-Syrian coordination and the current special and close ties between Cairo and Damascus.

Afghanistan

Government Troops Foil New Golboddin Offensive

LD2502114793 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 0230 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Golboddin [Hekmatyar] forces launched a series of sporadic attacks yesterday against the Islamic Army's positions. The enemy's attacks were foiled by the Islamic Army.

A responsible source of the Ministry of National Defense [Da Meli Defa Wezarat] told a BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY reporter that Golboddin's rebellious forces yesterday attacked the Islamic Army's positions to the south and east of the city, but were resisted and repelled by the Islamic Army.

The Islamic army has thus far observed the Islamic state's decision to stop its mopping up operations and call a unilateral cease-fire. It has only responded to firing by the opposition.

Afghan Official Interviewed on Discord, Unity

NC2302112593 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 14 Feb 93 pp 3, 12

[Interview with the "Deputy Guidance Minister" of Afghanistan during his visit to Tehran for the "Revolution Anniversary celebrations" (1-11 February); name of minister, date not given]

[Text] [RESALAT] There appears to be an increase in the discord between the factions in Afghanistan at the moment, it seems none of them are ready to compromise to find a unified policy for the administration of the country. What is the reason for this?

[Answer] There are a number of reasons for the discord between the groups such as party affiliations, efforts to gain political superiority, and linguistic and ethnic differences. Today, no group is ready to accept the viewpoint of the others and most of them resort to using force against one another. Now that we have an Islamic government in Afghanistan, after 13 years of occupation under a puppet government, various groups are fighting each other for political superiority. In some cases, these political disputes culminate in armed clashes.

[RESALAT] In your opinion, how can unity be established among the factions ruling Afghanistan?

[Answer] The only way to end these hostilities is to create unity among the factions. The only means of national victory is through unity. We can see this by looking at the history of the Islamic Revolution in Iran. In Afghanistan, the unity that brought independence has been ended by factional fighting. After attaining victory, each group began to pursue its own interests.

In my opinion, unity is the shortest route to national reconciliation. It would also be to the benefit of the Islamic system in Afghanistan. We could achieve a consensus if the factions would renounce their political aims and accept the presidency of Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani for a period specified by the Resolution and Settlement Council, then all the government positions could be negotiated.

The various factions in Afghanistan should not be intimidated by the present administration and should be patient. They should respect the opinion of the Resolution and Settlement Council, which is comprised of a large number of people, and pave the way for free general elections.

If the current problems can be solved amicably under the leadership of President Rabbani, it is possible that peace and stability can be established in the future. The people will then be able to rebuild their country by eliciting foreign and international assistance.

[RESALAT] What is the role of the government in establishing national unity?

[Answer] Unity is only possible if President Rabbani is openminded and allows participation in the government by all those groups that played a role in the jihad. He should not make any of the ethnic groups feel isolated or overlooked. No one should be afraid that their rights are being jeopardized. The former members of the ruling party should not fear retribution, that the mojahedin are seeking to take their historical revenge. [as published]

Thus, except for those who have committed crimes against the state or crimes against Islam, all who had a hand in the jihad for Afghanistan should have a share in the administrative power in Afghanistan.

The Islamic state of Afghanistan should be liberated from the morass of armed groups and ministries should not adopt decisions and regulations based on Western principles.

A legal system should be established in the ministries and government departments to deal with all decisions on interethnic relations. The system should ensure that deserving people are given important positions and irresponsible people are eliminated.

[RESALAT] What are the prospects for the future of Afghanistan?

[Answer] The prospects for the revolution in Afghanistan are still good if the Islamic Government of Afghanistan keeps the door of compromise and reconciliation open to all groups. If the sons of the revolution in Afghanistan, and all the revolutions in the world, are given power, the course of the revolution is guaranteed. This will create conditions which are conducive to cooperation with other countries for the reconstruction of the economic, cultural, and political structure of Afghanistan. Iran, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia can be particularly involved in the restoration of political stability in Afghanistan and can play a key role in the reconstruction of our country.

[RESALAT] Reports of murders in Afghanistan seem to have become a normal occurance. Last week we heard of the assassination of Mowlavi Nasrallah Mansur as well as other officials in Afghanistan. What are the repercussions of such actions?

[Answer] Mowlavi Nasrallah was one of the popular personalities of the jihad in Afghanistan and was highly respected. He stood up to the Russians and was equally revered by the people, the officials, and the soldiers in the trenches of the jihad. The people of Afghanistan were shocked by the report. His assassins have not yet been identified but we do have some idea about who is responsible.

The killing of individuals in Afghanistan does not help any faction or individual. One cannot simply punish one's enemy or get rid of them very easily because everyone is still armed. If killing becomes the norm in Afghanistan, no one will be safe. All the political factions in Afghanistan are armed and are capable of carrying out such murders. They can also take revenge very easily. However, this will not have pleasant consequences for the people and the country. This is the time of the country's reconstruction and people should not be attacking capable, popular figures in such a manner.

[RESALAT] Is is true that the Iranian Government is treating the Afghan refugees disrespectfully and is planning to repatriate them?

[Answer] The official policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the Afghan refugees has not been announced! The officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran are aware of the internal problems of Afghanistan and we have talked with the relevant officials during this visit.

With the victory of the revolution in Afghanistan, there is no reason for the continued stay of the refugees in Iran. Afghan officials should create the conditions for the return of the refugees so that our suffering people may return to their homeland.

Islamic countries, especially the Islamic Republic of Iran, should continue their usual support and pay attention to this problem. They should help make the economic, social, and educational conditions in Afghanistan attractive so that the refugees will return to their country. I hope the day will come when conditions will be so attractive that all the refugees will want to return to their country and invest there.

Flow of Afghan Refugees Abroad Continues

LD2502102893 Tehran IRNA in English 1002 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] United Nations HQ (New York), Feb. 25, (UNDPI)—For the first time since the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) began assisting Afghans repatriating from neighbouring Pakistan, more Afghans are fleeing their war-torn homeland than are returning from exile.

According to a UNHCR press release, the renewed exodus reflects the uncertain political climate in Afghanistan and the continuing hostilities among rival militias. It has also cast doubt on earlier predictions that up to 2 million Afghans would return from exile in 1993. It is the first time the trend has been reversed since the start of the UNHCR-assisted Afghan voluntary repatriation programme in July 1990.

An estimated 75,000 Afghan refugees entered Pakistan over the past 6 months. In addition, some 500,000 Kabul residents have become internally displaced since hostilities among rival militias erupted in August 1992.

The fall of the Soviet-installed Afghan Government in April 1992 triggered one of the largest voluntary repatriation movements ever assisted by the UNHCR. More than 1.5 million Afghans went home from Pakistan and Iran last year.

Relief operations in Afghanistan have been hampered by a lack of funding and deteriorating security conditions. In the worst attack involving the United Nation in Afghanistan, 3 U.N. employees and a consultant were killed on 1 February when they were ambushed en route to Jalalabad from Peshawar.

Campaign Against Poppy Growing Begins

BK2502074093 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 25 Feb 93 p 5

[Excerpts] Mohmand Darra, Afghanistan—Poppy crop on a small plot of land was ploughed out on Wednesday in Mohmand Darta district in eastern Afghanistan to herald the campaign against poppy- cultivation in Nangarhar province.

A group of Pakistani and Afghan journalists transported from Peshawar were present when a Russian tractor driven by a young Afghan began ploughing the poppy field. Haji Abdul Qadear, Governor of Nangarhar, was seated beside him as the operation began. [passage omitted] Haji Qadeer, who reached the roadside poppy fields at the head of a 18-vehicle cavalcade, said poppies on about 15 acres of land in Mohmand Darrai would be destroyed. It's argued that those who sowed poppies had violated the 'Teega (agreement) reached between the Nangrahar Commanders' shura and tribal elders of Muhmand Darra. They had agreed that no popy crop would be cultivated this season in return for the building of two dams on Kabul river to save their lands from erosion. He claimed popy-cultivation in Mohmand Darra had been critically affected as a result of the agreement. [passage omitted]

According to Qadeer, one of the dams on Kabul river being built with assistance form foreign donors was nearing completion.

He said another dam would be built later on the right bank of Kabul river to protect Muhamand Darra lands from erosion.

He said land erosion was the major problem of the area and the people were willing to cooperate with the authorities to root out poppy-cultivation if their precious lands could be saved from the raging floods in Kabul river.

Governor Qadeer complained that the United Nations and the United States officials combating drugs have yet to show more interest in controlling poppy-cultivation in Nangarhar. He said promises to provide agricultural machinery and inputs and execute development projects had never been honoured. "We simply don't have the resources to compensate poppy growers affectged by the ban on poppy- cultivation," he said. He explained that he didn't want the farmers to be given cash compensation and would instead prefer projects for collective good of the affected population.

In this context, he cited crop-substitution projects in Bajaur, Dir and Buner in Pakistan which have motivated the farmers into giving up the poppy-cultivation.

The Governor of Nagarhar tended to agree with the observation that it would require a lot of persuasion and incentives to root out poppies from the Shinwari, Khugiani and other areas of Nangarhar province. He recalled that some poppy crop was destoyed by him three years ago in Abdulkhel in Achin district following the violation of an agreement by the poppy cultivators.

Qadeer claimed that no heroin factory existed in Nangarhar. He, however, agreed that opium produced in Afghanistan was mostly smuggled to Pakistan. He felt drug addition in his province was almost non-existent despite the easy avalability of opium at cheaper rates.

Bangladesh

Paper Views Diversion of SAARC Members

BK2402153393 Dhaka DAINIK ITTEFAQ in Bengali 19 Feb 93 p 2

[Editorial: "SAARC Summit"]

[Text] Observers feel that the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] summit is under the influence of the ominous planet Saturn. The secretary general of SAARC, Ibrahim Zaki, has started touring member countries in order to salvage the forum. He arrived in Dhaka from New Delhi last Tuesday. Earlier, he visited Sri Lanka, Maldives, and Nepal. Zaki will go to Pakistan from Dhaka. It is not known how far he has been successful in his mission. It has not been possible to hold the SAARC summit in Dhaka even after the preparations were made twice. The secretary general has said that it is not his responsibility to finalize the date for the summit, and that it is the job of the SAARC chairman, Premadasa. But, earlier, an Indian news agency quoting the secretary general reported that the SAARC summit will be held in March. Now the BSS [Bangladesh National News Agency], quoting the same source, reported that the summit is likely to be held in April. High-level sources in Dhaka said it is not possible to hold the SAARC summit in the month of Ramadhan [fasting month]. Following Ramadhan is the Independence Day of Bangladesh on March 26. Hence, it would be possible to hold the summit after March, if all members agree to it.

Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao has questioned the logic behind holding the SAARC summit every year and has proposed that it should be held once every two years. All seven SAARC member countries are more or less poor. Many people believe there is more a display of grandeur than work during these meetings, while the actual work is being done at ministerial or secretary-level meetings. If this is the case, then the Indian prime minister's proposal can be taken into consideration. Apart from the debate on holding the SAARC summit in Dhaka, many still remember the controversy which took place during the last Colombo summit. For this reason many people are not very optimistic about the future of SAARC.

No one will say that SAARC has not been able to achieve any progress. But, it is true that this forum has not lived up to expectation. If SAARC fails to achieve its goal, many member countries may divert their attention to other regional forums like ASEAN [Association of South East Asian Nations] or ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization]. Iran has already invited Bangladesh to join the ECO. SAARC member countries have close historical and traditional links with each other. It is doubtful whether Bangladesh will find these links in other regional forums. For this reason Dhaka is very keen to strengthen the SAARC forum. In this regard the cooperation of other member countries particularly India is desirable.

India

Further Reportage on BJP Rally, Arrests

BJP Chief Joshi Arrested

BK2502075693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] The government today reiterated its stand to continue the ban on the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] rally and hold elections in the four states, formerly ruled by the BJP, only after normalcy is restored. BJP members left both houses of parliament to protest against the ban.

The home minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, told the Lok Sabha soon after the BJP leader, Mr. L.K. Advani, led his party colleagues out of the house that in the present surcharged atmosphere the government felt that the rally will create more problems across the country. He said once the communal situation is brought under control and normalcy restored, the government will allow any number of rallies in any part of the country. Mr. Chavan challenged Mr. Advani's statement that the government is trying to

crush democracy and said had the rally been allowed to take place, it would have worsened the already volatile situation. He said the government is trying to mobilize secular forces to meet the communal forces squarely.

Earlier, Mr. Advani claimed that his party members leaving the house was not a walk-out and the BJP's aim in organizing the rally was only to put pressure on the government to hold elections in the four states where the BJP was in power. He said the demands of the party also included withdrawal of the ban imposed on RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh], VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad], and Bajrang Dal and the construction of a permanent temple at Ayodhya.

In the Rajya Sabha, the BJP members led by their leader, Mr. Sikander Bakht, walked out in protest against, what they called, undemocratic action of the government in banning the rally. Mr. Sikander Bakht said that Delhi has been turned into a fortress and the common man is being put to inconvenience.

The BJP president, Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, and several party MP's [members of Parliament] and workers were arrested for violating prohibitory orders in New Delhi today. The police resorted to lathi [baton] charge and burst teargas shells to disperse the BJP workers trying to move toward the Boat Club. Water canons were also used. Earlier, Dr. Joshi addressed the party workers. There are also reports of some stray incidents of BJP workers trying to assemble at a few other places in the capital. The police said they were dispersed by resorting to teargas. The minister of state for home, Mr. Rajesh Pilot, has said the situation in the capital is under control. Talking to reporters after going round the city, the termed the rally planned for today as a flop.

BJP's Planned Rally Criticized

BK2402160893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Elaborate security arrangements have been made in the capital to maintain law and order. Police have stepped up vigil, particularly in sensitive pockets. Prohibitory orders have been clamped in several areas, banning the assembly of four or more persons. A police spokesman said orders have been issued to strictly deal with anyone violating the prohibitory orders.

The minister of state for home affairs, Mr. Rajesh Pilot, told newsmen that the proposed rally tomorrow is being organized on communal lines and the government is firm not to allow it. Reviewing the security arrangements at the Boat Club in the capital, he said law and order will be maintained at all costs. Mr. Pilot said that the government cannot allow rallies organized by communal forces and will fight such forces politically.

The minister of state for home, Mr. P.M. Sayeed, visited various places in the capital to see the preparedness of the Delhi police to deal with the situation arising out of the banned rally. He also reviewed the law and order situation at a meeting with the senior police and administrative officials. Mr. Sayeed assured that all basic amenities like water supply and transport will not be allowed to be affected due to the illegal rally. He also asked for the people's cooperation in maintaining law and order.

Leaders of various political parties have described the BJP's [Bharatiya Janata Party's] insistence to go ahead with tomorrow's banned rally in the capital as unfortunate. The Janata Dal leader, Mr. I.K. Gujral, told newsmen in New Delhi today that such unfortunate behavior on the part of the BJP had begun with the flouting of the Supreme Court directive and its undertakings to the courts and parliament on the Ayodhya issue. The CPI [Communist Party of India] general secretary, Mr. Indrajit Gupta, urged the government to stop the rally to make the ban meaningful. The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] leader, Mr. Somnath Chatterjee, said the BJP should not be allowed to disrupt the law and order situation. The Janata Dal-S leader appealed to the BJP to avoid any rally and the consequent confrontation. The CPI has urged the citizens of Delhi not to fall prey to any provocation of communal elements tomorrow. In a statement in New Delhi today, the party's central secretariat criticized the BJP for holding the rally. The statement said against the background of the events at Ayodhya on 6 December, the BJP's claim that tomorrow's rally would be peaceful cannot be accepted.

BJP Leader Advani Arrested

BK2502084693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0835 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] The rally called by the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] today has not been allowedd to be held. The rally banned by the government was to begin after 1200 [0630 GMT]. But as party workers assembled at five points in the capital between 1100 and 1200 and tried to march toward the Boat Club, the police obstructed them and at a few places made lathi [baton] charge and used tear gas to disperse them. Top BJP leaders, Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, Mr. L.K. Advani, and Mr. A.B. Vajpayee were arrested among others at various places for violating prohibitory orders. Several other BJP MP's and workers were also arrested.

The minister of state for home, Mr. Rajesh Pilot, has said the situation in the capital is under control. Talking to reporters, he said the rally planned for today has been a flop. Mr. Pilot said there has been some inconvenience to the public because of the restrictions and he was sorry for that.

The Delhi police commissioner, Mr. N.B. Kaushal, said a strict vigil is being maintained to maintain law and order. Additional forces have been deployed in sensitive areas. Talking to UNI, he said it is not the police, but the BJP which has to be blamed for the situation in the capital.

Heavy security arrangements have been made in the capital to strictly enforce the ban on the rallies of the Boat Club. Delhi Transport Corporation [DTC] has curtailed its services. A DTC spokesman said about 60 percent of its fleet is now running, though on diverted routes.

National Environment Campaign Termed 'Farcial'

BK2502031393 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 18 Feb 93 p 9

[Text] Madras—At last, a Madras-based environmental group—Save Nilgiris Campaign—has told the Environment Ministry exactly what it thinks about the much touted National Environmental Awareness Campaign (NEAC) observed each year from November 19 to December 18, by describing it as a "farcical annual ritual".

Moreover, it has also returned to the Environment Minister, Mr Kamal Nath, a cheque for Rs [rupees] 5000, with which the SNC was expected to conduct its campaign this year to protect the Nilgiris' environment.

In doing so, this little group has made a truthful statement on what has happened over the years to the NEAC, which was launched with much fanfare in November 1986 in memory of late Mrs Indira Gandhi. This organisation has neither a fancy office nor any other formal infrastructure, but is doing some good work to preserve the ecosystem in these hills,

The letter accompanying the returned cheque, dated February 8, says the NEAC has "become an aimless exercise with no proper pre- project screening .. and the co-ordinating agencies in their over- enthusiasm, and perhaps to justify their existence, have indiscriminately enrolled as many groups as they could, with little regard to their capabilities".

The letter is signed by the SNC co-ordinator, Mr N. Venugopal, who himself is a Badaga (the largest social group in Nilgiris). He said, "The co-ordinating agency for Tamil Nadu gave an advertisement in a newspaper asking voluntary agencies to come forth with applications to participate in the NEAC. I'm told that over 200 organisations have entered the fray."

Mr Manikanthan, a representative of the CPR Foundation which is the Regional Resource Agency for the NEAC for Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry, confirmed that 230 agencies had applied for the Central grant.

With all and sundry jumping onto the environmental bandwagon, the funding for genuine groups like the SNC has shrunk. Whereas in 1988, it got a grant of Rs 50,000 for its awareness and action programme for protecting the hills, the next year the amount shrunk to Rs 20,000. In 1990 and 1991, it got Rs 15,000 while this year the grant was a paltry Rs 5000.

Mr B.J. Krishnan, SNC president, said, "This year we had prepared a project report for organising village plays, music shows, posters and banners and a scheme to bring together about 2000 tribals of the area and make them interact with students who could document the information these people give on the rich bio-diversity of this region. We had submitted a proposal for Rs 46.500. but what we got is Rs 5,000. As no meaningful programme can be organised with this amount, we decided to return the cheque."

The letter has also urged Mr Kamal Nath to "reconsider the need to continue the campaign, and scrap or modify it suitably to ensure proper identification of groups and adequate financial support for their programmes".

Started as a one-man newsletter campaign in early 1980s, SNC was registered as a public trust in 1987 "after renowned environmentalist Mr Anil Agarwal urged us to do so". This group has done some very good work in creating awareness among the local people and the administration about the unique and vital natural heritage of Nilgiris. It is now co-ordinating the first South East Asian regional meeting of Environment Laison Centre, Nairobi, to be held in the Nilgiris in April, in which delegates from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal will participate.

Government Launches Gold Bonds Scheme

BK2402150993 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 19 Feb 93 p 12

[Text] NEW DELHI, Feb. 18—The Government today finally announced the Gold Bonds scheme under which subscription to the bonds will be accepted in the form of gold and at the end of a five- year period, an equivalent quantity of gold will be returned to the concerned subscriber with an interest of Rs [rupees] 40 per gm [gram] of gold.

The minimum limit for subscription is 500 gms of gold and there is no maximum limit. The scheme opens on March 15, this year and closes on June 14, 1993.

A major advantage of the scheme is that the initial subscribers to the scheme has been granted certain immunities under different acts as a result of which, they will not be required to disclose for any purpose the nature and source of acquisition of gold including the source of money with which the gold was acquired.

Further, no enquiry or investigation will be commenced against the subscriber under any of the acts such as Wealth Tax Act, 1957, the Gift Tax Act, 1958, the Income Tax Act, 1961, the Customs Act, 1962, the Foreign Exchange Regulations Act, 1973 and the Foreign Contribution Act, 1976.

The announcement of the scheme was preceded by the issue of an ordinance namely Gold Bonds (Immunities and Exemption) Ordinance, 1993 on Jan. 31, this year. The immunities granted under this ordinance will not be available where any proceedings in respect of the gold subscribed by the concerned subscriber have already

been initiated before the date of promulgation of ordinance. The ordinance also provides for certain tax exemptions under the Income Tax Act, 1957 and the Gift Tax Act to the initial subscriber.

According to the scheme, the Gold Bond is open to subscription by a resident in India, an individual, a Hindu undivided family, trustees of a trust, a firm or a company. Every subscriber who is desirous of making subscription to the Gold Bond shall apply to the offices/ branches of the Reserve Bank of India, and main branches of the State Bank of India specified for receiving applications for Gold Bonds 1998 and tender at least 500 gms of gold along with the application.

The Gold Bonds will be issued either in the form of Government Promissory Note or Stock Certificate, depending upon the option to be exercised by the subscriber. The Gold Bond issued in one form cannot be converted into the other form. Where no option is exercised the Bond will be issued in the form of Stock Certificate.

The Gold tendered will be assayed by the Government Mint and expressed in terms of 0.995 fineness. The Gold Bonds to be issued shall specify the weight of gold of 0.995 fineness losses. The weight of the gold at 0.995 fineness as determined by the Government Mint and indicated by the Reserve Bank of India in the Gold Bond shall be binding on the subscriber.

The scheme stipulates that the Gold Bonds will be issued for a minimum denomination of 500 gms of gold, except in cases where the gold tendered after assaying is of a weight less than 500 gms. The Gold Bonds will be repaid in the form of gold of 0.995 fineness five years after the date of issue.

The Bonds will bear a lump sum interest for the period of five years payable on maturity in rupees at the rate of Rs 40 for each gramme of gold of 0.995 fineness. The tender of the gold on the maturity of Gold Bonds along with the interest due thereon will be made from the receiving office to be specified by the subscriber in the application form.

The Bonds have nomination facility and are transferable. The Bonds will be an eligible form of security for advances from banks.

Iran

Velayati News Conference on International Issues

LD2402201593 Tehran IRNA in English 1826 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 24, IRNA—The foreign minister today described president Hashemi-Rafsanjani's recent message to leaders of the European Community (EC), as "firm, frank and clear" and said it shows that on no account will the Islamic republic retreat from its principled position.

"This message determines the policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran and is a reply to the countries which attended the Edinburgh meeting," said 'Ali Akbar Velayati in a press conference.

The president in his message to heads of the 12-member EC last week spelled out Iran's policy on various issues including attempts of the West to interfere in the case of sentenced apostate Salman Rushdie the author of the sacrilegious book "The Satanic Verses".

Velayati who recently visited Brazil, Mexico and Cuba, spoke of bright prospects of economic cooperation between Iran and Latin America.

Iran, he said, is keen on utilising the potential of Latin American countries and take them as new economic partners.

For instance, he added, Iran-Brazil trade exchanges last year totalled dlrs [dollars] 1.3 billion with Brazil purchasing dlrs 900 million worth of oil from the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Velayati said that his talks with officials of Latin America were focused on various topics including trade, economic cooperation and transfer of technology.

He, however, refuted rumours that talks with Mexican officials also included transfer of technology from the United States to Iran, and said he discussed with his hosts transfer of technology from Mexico, Brazil and Cuba in different areas.

"The claim that the talks concerned U.S. technology is not true," said the Iranian foreign minister.

Every country, he said, works for its interests and Iran is no exception, and will make use of the potentials of other countries in line with its interests.

He pointed to the growth of shipbuilding industry in Mexico and said Iran will benefit from that country's experience in building modern fishing boats.

On Afghanistan, Velayati said Afghan factions especially the government in Kabul have requested Iranian mediation and, "we have invited them to come to Tehran.

"The invitation has been accepted by (Hezb-e Eslami leader) Golboddin Hekmatyar and (Hezb-e Wahdat secretary general) Abdul 'Ali Mazari, but, (interim President) Borhanoddin Rabbani has not yet replied," he disclosed.

The foreign minister expressed Iran's readiness to mediate between Afghan parties, and condemned the recent crimes committed by troops of the Supervisory Council and Abdul-Rasul Sayyaf's militia's in the western parts of Kabul.

"Iran has called on President Rabbani to punish those involved in the inhuman crimes against the Shiites," he reiterated.

In their brutal attack on unarmed civilians in Western Kabul last week the Joint Supervisory Council and Sayyaf forces, pillaged and destroyed homes and molested and kidnapped Shiite women, making some 6,000 people homeless.

On Tehran's relations with neighbouring Ankara and the conflicting statements of Turkish officials alleging Iranian involvement in terrorist actions in that country, Velayati said, "we have always given reply to such allegations. We do not allow anyone to accuse Iran unfoundedly."

He said that he and the Turkish foreign minister took part in a joint interview in Pakistan earlier this month where he categorically refuted Iranian involvement in Turkey.

Velayati said that Turkish officials including that country's president, prime minister and foreign minister, have admitted that there was no evidence to support the allegations made by certain officials and publications against Iran.

He recalled Turkey's unprincipled stand earlier on its seizure of the Iran-bound Cypriot ship "Cape Maleas" a year ago, and expressed regret on Ankara's illogical stance towards the Islamic Republic of Iran.

He, however, described as "positive" the stands of some Turkish officials in wake of the propaganda campaign against Islamic Iran and added that the press propaganda and statements of officials influenced by certain biased publications against Iran is not in line with that country's interests.

Repetition of such baseless charges by a country's official will discredit in the eyes of world public opinion.

Velayati on South American Talks, Afghan 'Crimes'

LD2402190793 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Iran and Brazil have reached an agreement on the construction of the third Karun dam. Under the agreement the Brazilian government will grant long-term credit to Iran for the construction of the dam.

Foreign Minister Velayati, who was describing the outcome of his trips to a number of Central and Latin American countries at a meeting with journalists, added: At the third Joint Political-Economic Committee of Iran and Brazil, in addition to dam construction, cooperation between the two countries in oil, mines and metals, sugarbeet, and banking were reviewed.

According to the foreign minister, in Mexico methods of cooperation between the two countries in fisheries and the purchase of shipping trawlers were reviewed. Also, within the next two months, Tehran and Mexico City will be linked by air. This will be the first direct flight by the Islamic Republic's airline to a Central or Latin American country.

Mr. Velayati added: In our talks in Cuba, our two countries agreed to cooperate in the export of oil from Iran and the import of sugar from Cuba. Also, Iran and Cuba will cooperate in the manufacture of medicines and vaccines.

He said that the recent UN decision to put Serbian criminals on trial stemmed from the initiative of Islamic countries. He then condemned the crimes committed against Shiites in Afghanistan and called on the Kabul government to try to put a stop to such crimes. He stressed that the responsibility for what is happening in Kabul now lies with the Afghan government, and called on the government of that country to punish the perpetrators of those crimes.

Velayati on Relations With Central Asia

LD2302180893 Tehran IRNA in English 1741 GMT 23 Feb 93

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 23, IRNA—Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati today dismissed as "baseless" the Western countries' propaganda against Iran's Central Asian policy, and told his New Zealand counterpart Don McKinnon, that grounds for cooperation between the Islamic republic and the former Soviet republics are "very extensive".

Velayati said the geographical situation and common cultural bonds between Iran and Central [Asia] are factors for further consolidation of mutual cooperation.

The republics have found Iran to be sincere in its relations with them during the short period of cooperation in the aftermath of the Soviet collapse.

McKinnon who arrived in Tehran last night, underlined Iran's decisive role in the region.

McKinnon referring to his country's assignment as one of the temporary members of the United Nations Security Council, thought that the U.N. should exert more pressure on Iraq to make it accept the full implementation of the U.N resolutions.

Velayati replied that the Damuscus meeting between the foreign ministers of Iran, Syria and Turkey, was a positive step in efforts to end the crisis in Iraq.

New Zealand was recently elected as one of the temporary members of the United Nations' Security Council.

Increased Relations With Russia Favored

NC2302162193 Tehran SALAM in Persian 14 Feb 93 p 12

[Unattributed commentary: "Developments in Russia and Iranian Diplomacy"]

[Excerpts] In the past few days, Russia has been witnessing major developments that indicate a forging of new relations there. The massive socioeconomic crisis has resulted in four-figure inflation, a sharp drop in the Gross National Product, and a swift decline in the popularity of the country's leadership (as endorsed by the official statistics centers). This is all evidence of an intensifying of internal dissent in the Russian leadership.

In spite of a compromise the two ruling factions reached last December due to their fears that their opponents would come to power, the faction in favor of peaceful social and economic reform—which has a more important position in the parliament and Chernomyrdin's cabinet—has stepped up its pressure on the president. By doing this, it is once again preparing the ground for extricating greater privileges from Yeltsin.

Yeltsin's retreat to the moderate faction has made it possible for this bloc to be seen as the leading force in Russia, even though Western circles favor Yeltsin.

The system that came into existence in Russia after the dissolution of the Soviet Union was, in fact, an arbitrary government, led by one man who became president. In no way was there any manifestation of the will of the majority of the Russian people. This is what kept the various factions away from the decisionmaking bodies. In view of the great influence of these bodies on the nation's executive apparatus, the factions had no recourse but to implement the president's decrees, which he issues on the basis of his own opinions and those of his domestic and foreign (!) advisers. [passage omitted]

It is due to this dissent that the diplomatic apparatus of various countries have, for a while now, been involved in political negotiations with the opponents of Yeltsin's government. Iraq provides a good example of what we are saying. It has invited parliamentary delegations from the Russian opposition to Iraq, which has gradually led to a change in the official Russian policy on Iraq. It reached the point, in fact, that Rutskoy has said his government "would veto all Security Council action against Iraq." The liberal foreign minister of Russia was so afraid of interference by his opponents in parliament that he called for a "review of Iraqi-Russian relations."

In view of the daily increasing political and propaganda pressure by the United States and its minions in the region against our revolution and our Islamic homeland, the Islamic Majles and the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran should avail themselves of this opportunity and change Russia's policy by preventing it from following the United States in the Middle East. In view of Russia's geographical location, we should capitalize on its influence in the Central Asian republics and its membership in the Security Council. This can be done by forging relations with the stronger faction there, thus exerting a favorable influence on Russia's Middle East policy.

UNESCO Chief's Support for Rushdie Protested

LD2302145793 Tehran IRNA in English 1357 GMT 23 Feb 93

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 23, IRNA—Chairman of the National Commission for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Dr. Mostafa Mo'in expressed concern of Iran's scientific and cultural centers over UNESCO chief's recent statement in support of the heretic Salman Rushdie.

In a letter to the Director-General of UNESCO Federico Mayor, Mo'in protested at his Feb. 17 statement supporting the author of "THE SATANIC VERSES" which has caused over one billion world Muslims indignation.

"Rushdie's issue today cannot be evaluated independent of his yesterday's anti-cultural and anti-ethical action as well as the constant political grudge of his backers and guides," Mo'in said in his letter to the UNESCO chief.

Stressing that one of UNESCO's obligations was to protect "the limits of ethics" and the world's moral standards, Mo'in said Iran expected UNESCO, as the moral representative of the world community and its director-general, to adopt an appropriate stance "away from political considerations."

Moves by Egypt's Mubarak Against Unions Criticized

LD2502112593 Tehran IRNA in English 1039 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 25, IRNA—An English daily here, criticising the moves made by Husni Mubarak against major Egyptian unions, wrote that such measures could not roll back their Islamic nature.

The 'KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL' editorial Wednesday [24 February] said that Mubarak should know better than to engineer moves that had already proved counter-productive in other countries.

It commented that the recent endorsement of "a draft law" by the Egyptian assembly which is largely dominated by Mubarak's ruling National Democratic Party sought to "curb the growing influence of Islamists in the unions."

Out of 22 major unions, 11 are controlled by the so-called 'Islamic fundamentalists'.

The editorial noted that this was a mere waste of time and energy for the Egyptian rulership, America's closest Arab ally, "on an issue that will harm Egyptian stability before hurting the influence of the popularly-supported unions."

It further said that the Mubarak regime, terrified by the systematic growth of Islamic revivalism, had so far made many futile attempts to stem the movement, the current target being the choice of the "educated class who work and worry for the poor."

Most of the unions, dominated by the Islamic opposition, include doctors, engineers, pharmacists, agronomists, sociologists, scientists, lawyers and others who are concerned over the poor and needy. "The pro-Western ruling elite in Cairo wants to put a legal end to this tend" the daily wrote.

The paper believed that the approach of Iran's deposed Pahlavi regime to the Islamic revolution could serve as an example for Mubarak. The higher the opposition against the regime became, the more restricted the state grew to "beat the heat out of the revolutionaries." Since people were with the movement, the regime failed to attain its evil aim.

Today's Egypt, the same way, had reached a point of no return, the faith awaiting any regime which seeks legitimacy outside national frontiers, it continued.

"The American aid and assistance has miserably failed to give this North African nation a relative degree of stability and prosperity. The growing challenge to Mubarak's authority and the rapidly deteriorating relations between the rulers and the ruled, has put the country in a very volatlie situation.

"The people of Egypt enjoy respect and influence even beyond the Arab world as a result of their progressiveness and social and political maturity."

No regime can deprive them of this character, KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL concluded.

Trade With UK Remains at Low Level

LD2402172793 Tehran IRNA in English 1655 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] London, Feb. 24, IRNA—While Iran's exports to Britain marginally rose by 3.85 per cent and imports increased by 11 per cent, overall there was little significant improvement on trade over the past year that tends to reflect the low status of relations.

Figures from the Central Statistics Office put UK sales to Iran at 568 million [mn] pounds sterling last year, compared with 511 mn pounds sterling in 1991. During the same period, imports showed a modest rise of 6 mn pounds sterling to 165 mn pounds sterling and leaves an overall trade balance in the UK's favour at 403 mn pounds sterling.

Trade figures between the two countries have regularly fluctuated since the Islamic revolution triumphed in Iran and have never reached anywhere near its heights before 1979, when total trade often exceeded 1 billion [billion] pounds sterling and even 1.5 bn .

In terms of export sales to Iran, Britain lags well behind its rivals, like Germany, Japan and Italy and it is notable in the latest provocations, again concerning sentenced apostate Salman Rushdie, London is trying to bring in its Western partners, who have more to lose.

Because of the Islamic revolution, Britain lost more of its lucrative overseas interests than any other country, apart from the U.S. and this is exampled by the decline of British Petroleum from being the UK's top company to be now rated sixth.

Petroleum and related products still make up the bulk of Iran's exports to Britain, but one-third is now made of items, including food and manufactured goods.

British exports to Iran overwhelmingly consist machinery, transport equipment and other manufactured products. One new trend is that Iran now sells more fruit, vegetable and other food items to Britain than what it purchases.

Velayati Congratulates New Sudanese Counterpart

LD2102123593 Tehran IRNA in English 1018 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 21, IRNA—Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati sent a message of congratulation to his newly-appointed Sudanese counterpart Husayn Abu-Salih.

In his message, Velayati expressed hope that the brotherly and friendly ties of two revolutionary and Muslim countries would be further consolidated, especially in the present condition when the Islamic world is invaded by the world arrogant powers.

Abu-Salih replaced 'Ali Ahmad Sahlul last month.

Return of Afghan Refugees To Be 'Voluntary'

LD2502114493 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] The return of Afghan refugees [from Iran] will be pursued with greater emphasis next year [beginning 21 March]. The return of the Afghan refugees will be on an individual and voluntary basis, said the Ministry of Interior and the UN high commissioner for refugees in a press statement. Meanwhile the Iranian Government will continue its humanitarian aid until the voluntary return of all the refugees, the statement said.

All the refugees volunteering to return to Afghanistan should report to their local office of governor or to the inter-city posts—created in the central regions of provinces catering for refugees—and receive passes good for travel via borders of the provinces of Sistan va Baluchestan and Khorasan. They will receive $25 in cash as well as 50 kg of wheat and a carpet before returning to their country.

East Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan Plan Cooperation

LD2202145293 Tehran IRNA in English 1357 GMT 22 Feb 93

[Text] Tabriz, E. Azerbaijan Prov., Feb. 22, IRNA—A protocol on bilateral technical and industrial cooperation was signed between Iran's East Azerbaijan Province and the neighbouring Republic of Azerbaijan in Baku Sunday [21 February].

The document, signed following two days of negotitions between members of Iran-Azerbaijan Joint Economic Commission, also calls for establishment of air links between the republican capital of Baku and the provincial capital of Tabriz, opening of Azerbaijani Consulate in Tabriz and exchange of professors and students.

The two sides are also to establish barter trade on industrial commodities and food stuff.

The protocol was signed by Governor General of East Azerbaijan Province 'Ali Abdolali-Zadeh and Vice-Speaker of Azerbaijani Parliament Afyedin Jalilov.

Iran is also to help the republic rehabilitate parts of its industries.

Several industries in the Autonomous Republic of Nakhichevan, including textile and carpet weaving factories, are to resume operation through the technical assistance of East Azerbaijan Province experts.

The Azerbaijani official hailed Iran's humanitarian aids to the people of Nakhichevan, saying they prevented many disastrous events in the republic.

Commentary Criticizes UN Human Rights Report

LD2502143593 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1049 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] The special envoy of the United Nation's Committee on Human Rights yesterday submitted a report on the Islamic Republic of Iran to that organization in Geneva. The report raises some previous issues and makes some one-sided and unrealistic criticisms of a number of judicial rulings, such as the execution of smugglers.

In 1989, the Islamic Republic of Iran began a legal and all-encompassing move to combat narcotics, which envisages severe punishment for professional smugglers. Published statistics show that European countries also benefit greatly from the Islamic Republic's efforts to combat professional smugglers.

Part of the fight against narcotics is concentrated in regions where the smugglers engaged in lawless activities are armed. It is natural that the violation of national sovereignty in any country by a group of armed criminals should be confronted appropriately and decisively. These armed criminals often resort to terrorism, killing people, and undermining the security of society. In spite of this, the different stages of trial by court, passing files over to the state prosecutor general, and the confirmation by the Supreme Court or the State Prosecutor of any sentences handed down, proceed in accordance with the law.

Other countries are considering the death sentence as a punishment for professional smugglers. But really, are those who push innocent young people into the death trap of addiction not violating human rights? Are not narcotic users who are dragged into this habit not human beings?

In Galindo Pohl's new report, reference is again made to violations of the rights of minorities and to political freedoms. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, minorities are free to administer the affairs of their religions on the basis of their own religious laws, in accordance to the Constitution. Although minorities are a very small percentage of the population in Iran, they are permitted to have deputies representing them in the Islamic Consultative Assembly [Majles].

As to legitimate [mashru'] and legal freedoms, suffice it to say that Iran's president is elected by direct popular vote once every four years. Majles deputies, who have different political persuasions, are also elected once every four years by the people. Within the law, the press criticizes the government's social, economic, or political programs. Under Article 23 of the Constitution, it is forbidden to persecute people because of their beliefs [taftish-e aqa'ed]. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, no one is legally persecuted for their thoughts. Iran's parliament [previous word in English] is one of the most talkative parliaments in the Middle East, and the deputies attend to people's difficulties and problems and the government's programs with total freedom.

It is natural that any country or nation reserves the right to confront in an appropriate way any so-called freedom that tramples underfoot what society holds to be sacred and its rituals, or that disrupts public security. On the other hand, Islamic countries as a whole, and not merely Iran, have a different understanding of human rights from the West with regard to the rights defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. When the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was issued in 1948, only seven Muslim countries were members of the United Nations. Now, 50 Muslim countries are members of that organization. In this respect, Islamic law has not been explained and integrated as the fundamental law of 1 billion Muslims. Thus, it would be better if the West were to judge human rights issues by adopting a more enlightened view of Islamic law and jurisprudence [ahkam-e feqhi].

Assyrians Deny Violations of Rights

LD2302183193 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 23 Feb 93

[Text] In a joint statement today the clerical representatives of Assyrians living in Iran and the representative of Assyrians in the Majles expressed regret that the issue of the violation of the rights of religious minorities in the Islamic Republic of Iran has been raised. They said that this move is biased and far from the truth.

The statement reads: We, the religious and social leaders of Iran's Assyrians—a group whose historical bond with this land goes back a several thousand years—reject such baseless propaganda and regard it as a tool to bring pressure to bear on the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Stressing that the rights of religious minorities are catered for in the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the religious and social leaders of the Assyrians declared: Iran's Assyrians have complete freedom in performing their religious rites and traditional ceremonies and do not face any restrictions in this respect.

Zoroastrians Deny Violations of Minority Rights

LD2502151693 Tehran IRNA in English 1447 GMT 25 Feb 93

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 25, IRNA—The Association of Zoroastrian Priests and Tehran Zoroastrians released a joint statement today dismissing as "baseless" the western media allegations on violation of minority rights in the Islamic Republic. The statement said foreign elements and those influenced by foreigners in league with suspicious political elements abroad are behind the allegation as part of their futile efforts to involve the religious minorities, including Zoroastrians. It added that the Zoroastrian community hates such poisoning of public opinions.

In Islamic Iran Zoroastrians are free to practice their religious rites and national and religious celebrations according to Articles 13, 14 and 15 of the constitutional law, noted the statement. It concluded that despite all these wild accusations of the enemies Iran would stay proud on the world stage.

Opposition Claims Montazeri Under House Arrest

PM2302145693 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 20 Feb 93 pp 1, 4

[Safa Ha'eri report: "Two Iranian Oppositionists Emphasize: Montazeri Under House Arrest"]

[Text] Paris—Former Iranian President Abol Hasan Bani-Sadr and Iranian oppositionist clergyman Ayatollah Mehdi Ha'eri have cast doubt on the statement which IRNA attributed to Ayatollah Montazeri (one of the revolution's leaders) the day before yesterday, in which he denied reports of his arrest.

Bani-Sadr and Ha'eri emphasized to AL-HAYAH yesterday that the information available to them indicates that Montazeri is currently under house arrest in Qom (fortress of Iranian clergymen). They said that Revolutionary Guard men are occupying his house and answering telephone calls.

The two Iranian oppositionists, who have good ties with Montazeri, added that two of Montazeri's grandchildren and a number of his followers are under arrest. The Revolutionary Guard seized all the documents and papers present in the house, confiscating some of them.

On the denial distributed by IRNA, Bani-Sadr, who was among the first to announce the news of Montazeri's arrest, told AL-HAYAH in a statement in his house in the Paris suburb of Versailles: "We fabricated nothing about the disagreement between (the republic's guide) 'Ali Khamene'i and Montazeri," whom the former described as an agent for U.S. intelligence. He pointed out that in an editorial the newspaper JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI, mouthpiece of the hardliners, openly threatened Montazeri with murder and it also warned him not to continue his opposition to the imam, who would determine his fate. Observers described this article as a clear threat.

Ha'eri told AL-HAYAH over the telephone from his exile in Germany that Montazeri's fate will be like that of senior oppositionist clergymen like Share'at Madari, Sadeq Rohani, and Tabtaba'i Qommi, who were stripped of their posts and put under house arrest.

Qommi and Rohani are still under house arrest. Shire'at Madari died of an illness a few years ago.

Russia Reportedly Behind Republic's Clashes

LD2402092193 Tehran IRNA in English 0811 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 24, IRNA—An Iranian Majlis deputy believes that the dispute between the Armenian and Azerbaijan Republics was "a plot hatched by certain powers who want to keep both the republics under their clutches."

Majlis Deputy Mohammad Abbas-Pour from Naku, West Azerbaijan Province, said in an interview carried by the 'TEHRAN TIMES' Wednesday [24 February] that Russia could be behind the dispute. In case the two republics become politically and economically strong, they would never bow before Moscow, he added.

Azerbaijan and Armenia have been engaged in war during the past four years over the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave.

He said that Russia had been supplying weapons to both the republics to fan the flames of conflict between them. Referring to the coexistence of Azeri and Armenian communities in Iran, he said that Iran could be a model for both republics.

Several hundreds of Armenians are living along with Muslims in Maku, he said, and there was not a single example of religious intolerance between them.

Maku has two ancient historical churches named 'Tatvoos' and 'Jourjour' and Armenian pilgrims pay homage to them during the Iranian month of Tir starting June 21 every year since they are considered especially auspicious.

Abbas-Pour believes that Iran can be the best country to mediate between the two republics due to its politico-geographical situation and historical background.

Turning to the relief aid sent to Nakhichevan and other affected parts of the world, he said that Iran carried out the move although this was really difficult for particular political and sensitive situations in these areas.

Algerian Leader's Visit to Tunisia Viewed

LD2102131493 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1055 GMT 21 Feb 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] The visit of Ali Kafi, chairman of Algeria's High Council of State, to Tunisia and his meeting with Tunisia's President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali indicates that relations between Algeria and Tunisia have returned to normal after a period of tension. [passage omitted]

Now that pro-Islamic movements are spreading throughout North African countries and because movements of this kind in any of those countries would also affect neighboring countries, the regional governments have decided to take extensive measures to confront the growth and spread of these movements.

Along the same lines, security officials from Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria recently signed an agreement on the basis of which they will share each other's facilities and experiences to confront pro- Islamic movements. Therefore, it seems that one of the major topics of discussion between Ali Kafi and Ben Ali will be the assessment of ways to confront the Islamic movement. [passage omitted]

In any case, political observers believe that Algerian success depends directly on the internal developments in that country. The Algerian position in the Arab Maghreb Union would obviously be uncertain if the Algerian High Council of the State does not succeed in solving that country's internal crisis.

Mine-Sweeping Equipment Delivered 20 Feb

LD2002210593 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 20 Feb 93

[Text] In the course of a ceremony today, the first batch of minecrushing [meenkub] and minesweeping equipment manufactured by the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps was placed at the disposal of the War-Stricken Regions' Reconstruction Headquarters. In the ceremony, attended by a number of officials from the Self-sufficieny Jihad Organization [Sazeman Jihad Khod-Kasa'i] and the War-Stricken Region's Reconstruction Headquarters, the war-stricken regions' economic and social issues were outlined. Also, emphasis was placed on the need to pay attention to the war refugees' problems and to encourage them to return to their towns and dwellings. It should be noted that the said equipment, which was designed and manufactured domestically, can neutralize thousands of mines.

Commentary Discusses Women's Role, Employment

LD2402162593 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Station commentary]

[Excerpts] In the name of God. A seminar on the role of women in society, organized jointly by Tehran province's Women's Committee and Martyr Beheshti University's Construction Jihad unit, was held from 20-23 February. At the seminar, scholars and specialists on women's issues discussed and surveyed the role and status of women from the point of view of the Koran and the Nahj ol-Balaqeh [text on Islamic teachings attributed to Imam 'Ali] and also the role of women in the social, economic, political, and cultural spheres. [passage omitted]

According to statistics, women's participation in the workforce in our country, compared to other countries, is estimated at 5.5 percent. Quantitative research into the rate of employment of women in Iran shows that this rate went down from 11.8 percent in 1977 to 8.44 percent in 1986 and increased to 75 percent in 1991 as compared with 1986 [figures as heard]. Despite the drop in the number of women working in 1986, the quantitative study of the patterns of women in employment indicates that there have been more career advances for women in recent years. The number of women working in educational and specialized jobs has increased by 45.2 percent. Currently, over 35 percent of the jobs in the civil service are occupied by women. The Ministry of Education and Training and the Ministry of Health, Treatment, and Medical Training, employ the greatest number of women.

The Islamic Revolution and then the imposed war resulted in some changes in the economic system of the society. The imposed war necessitated the participation of more strata of the population, and the number of women who were rendering positive services and contributing to the defense of the country cannot be underestimated. The qualitative and quantitative study of changes in the patterns of women's employment in our country in the years following the Islamic Revolution shows that the greater awareness and perception of

women, which was acquired after the victory of the Revolution, created a more conducive ideologiccal-cultural basis for their greater participation in different social activities. Generally, when there is talk of a sound division of labor between men and women in society, what is meant is that the necessary ground must be prepared for the voluntary employment of women in jobs that suit their nature.

Currently, while we are going through the period of reconstruction, it is appropriate that the potential labor of specialized and committed women be used more than before in the drive toward the growth and developement of society. And here, social and welfare measures and also the creation of laws to attract women to the job market can help increase and make more effective the participation of women in the expansion and progress of society. It should be noted that the increasing participation of women in the process of expansion does not mean that traditional laws should lose their importance or that correct use should not be made of useful and positive universal norms. The value of the correct upbringing of children and the existance of a strong and stable family are especially important. Thus, women should remain as the chief elements in the family network and in their roles as mothers. At the same time, the question of their hidden work and its important role in the course of expansion should not be ignored.

Pakistan

Envoy Discusses Peace Proposals With Hekmatyar

BK2402161893 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Pakistan's Ambassador to Afghanistan Amir Usman met with Engineer Golboddin Hekmatyar at Hezb-e-Eslami's headquarters (Charas Sohrab) and discussed the current situation in Afghanistan and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's proposal to end the fighting in Afghanistan. Hekmatyar expressed gratitude for Pakistan's positive approach toward the Afghanistan issue. Earlier, the Pakistani ambassador had meetings with all Afghan leaders based in Kabul for an acceptable solution to the Afghanistan issue.

Spokesman on Visits of Afghan, Russian Leaders

BK2402150893 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] The president of Afghanistan, Professsor Borhanoddin Rabbani, will visit Pakistan shortly. A foreign office spokesman said in Islamabad today, the Afghan leader will visit the country on an invitation from the prime minister. The visit, he said, will provide an opportunity to further discuss the endeavors which have been made to promote peace and stability in Afghanistan. The spokesman said the Russian foreign minister, Mr. Andrey Kozyrev, will also pay a three-day official visit to Pakistan from the ninth of next month.

In reply to a question, the spokesman described the address to parliament by the Indian president as unfortunate. He said, as usual, India is trying to externalize its internal problems and putting the blame on Pakistan. The spokesman emphasized that it is India which is responsible for difficulties in relations between the two countries. The spokesman said continued unwillingness on the part of India to resolve its dispute with Pakistan in accordance with the Simla agreement is reflective of India's seriousness to have good relations with its neighbors.

'Grow-Poppy' Movement Gains Momentum in Buner

BK2502045193 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 25 Feb 93 p 5

[Text] Peshawar—Known for its mass production of the poppy crop throughout Asia, Buner will pour a sizeable quantity of opium into the market this season.

If not destroyed "voluntarily" poppy will be the major cash crop of the district his year, for the first time since 1979, The crop was banned by late general Zia ul Haq through promulgation of the Had ordinance.

However, local jirgas in three tehsils [sub-districts] of Buner have decided to go for the cultivation of the crop at any cost. The grow-poppy campaign, supported by all the political parties, has given a tough time to the administration.

Hundreds of people were arrested from tehsil Chamia, charged with cultivation of the crop and for motivating others to grow poppy. About 35 persons from the Khundokhel tehsil are reportedly still in D I Khan jail. They blocked the Buner-Mardan road at Ambela to protest over the visit of Federal Minister for narcotics, Rana Chandar Singh, to the area last week.

Like the previous two years, people in Chagharzad tehsil have decided to socially boycott those who would not support the jirga's stand on the cultivation of the crop. Certain jirga members in Chagharzai had been assigned the duty to provide seed and make other necessary arrangements for the cultivation to the people.

The "Chamla relapse" would prove fatal for anti-narcotics control activities as the area had totally given up poppy since the early 80's following the initiation of the United Nations funded crops substitution programme in Chamla. The project managed to dig only five tube walls and electrify about 20 to 30 houses from the Koga Solar-System energy plant during its eight year existence.

Almost all the irrigation channels of the project have either been washed away by seasonal streams or vanished, having remained unmanned for most of the time.

It is to be noted that Chamla tehsil is the most productive area for the poppy crop. The government claim that farmers are voluntarily destroying the crop is controversial. "It makes no sense that poverty stricken farmers happily allow the authorities to "voluntarily" destroy their only source of livelihood.

It is not the hobby of the Buneris to uproot poppy plants or to be sprayed upon by herbicide every year," revealed Mohamber Bacha, ex-member district council Chamla.

Bacha thinks people should be provided with alternative means of livelihood, "We have not insisted on the cultivation of the crop, but the government must announce an incentive package for Buner so that the people could easily earn their two meals" said Bacha. He is the ANP [Awami National Party] President for Tehsil Chamla and is in the forefront of the grow poppy campaign in his area.

Karachi Police Seize 30 Kg of Heroin

BK2502044493 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 25 Feb 93 p 4

[Text] Karachi, Feb 24—Excise and taxation police Karachi arrested two persons and recovered from their possession 30 kg of high quality heroin, worth Rs [rupees] 300 million in the underworld market. This was stated by Secretary Excise and Taxation K.B. Rind, at a press briefing here Wednesday. He said the accused were identified as Gulazada and Saeed Ahmed. They were arrested by an excise and taxation team after a raid at Bilawal Shah Noorani Goth, near Karachi University. Mr. Rind said accused during interrogation confessed that they used to bring heroin from NWFP [Northwest Frontier Province] to Karachi.

General Headquarters Announces Military Promotions

BK2502072893 Karachi DAWN in English 24 Feb 93 p 20

[Text] Rawalpindi, Feb 23—The General Headquarters has announced the promotion of two Majors-General to the rank of Lieutanants-General.

They are Major-General Ziaullah Khan and Major-General Moinuddin Haider, says an ISPR [Interservice Public Relations] press release.

Following is a brief life-sketch of Major General Ziaullah Khan:

Major General Ziaullah Khan was comissioned in the Azad Kashmir Regiment in 1962. He saw active service in both the 1965 and the 1971 wars. He is a graduate from Command and Staff College, Quetta and National Defence College, Rawalpindi.

The general officer has held command, staff and instructional appointments in various ranks. He has commanded an infantry brigade and an infantry division. He was promoted Major General in 1988.

At present he is serving as Director General (Plans), at joint Staff Headquareters.

A brief life-sketch of Major General Moinduddin Haider is as follows.

Major General Moinuddin Haider passed out first in the 26th PMA long course and was commissioned in 1962 in the Frontier Force Regiment. He saw action in the 1965 and the 1971 Indo-Pak wars. He served as instructor at Pakistan Military Academy from 1967 to 1970. He commanded a reconnaissance and support battalion twice i.e. in 1975-77 and 1980-81. He was head of Pakistan mutual cooperation group in Somalia from 1978-81. Subsequently he served as GSO-I [General Services Officer-Infantry] (Operations) and Colonel Staff in an infantry division headquarters.

Promoted Brigadier in 1903, he left for UK to attend Royal College of Defence studies 1984 course. He was the first Pakistani officer to get his thesis published in the Sexford House papers. Appointed Director Military Training at General Headquarters in 1986, he was closely associated with the planning and conduct of exercise Zarba Momin.

On being promoted to the rank of Major General in 1989, he commanded an infantry division since September 1991, he has been serving as Deputy Chief of the General Staff of General Headquarters.

German Chancellor's Visit to India Viewed

BK2502045393 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 24 Feb 93 p 7

[Editorial: "Dealing with Delhi"]

[Text] German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, who has just concluded a five-day visit to Delhi, has done some plain speaking to his hosts. On Friday he urged India to sign the Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT]. This led Indian President, Shankar Dayal Sharma to parrot the refrain that the issue of nuclear disarmament had to be dealt with at a global level. Then four days later Mr Kohl refused to endorse Delhi's stand on Kashmir, reasoning that he had not come to India to offer a solution to the problem. Germany, he said, wants India and Pakistan to build an atmosphere of trust and to pave the way for a peaceful solution of the Kashmir problem. However, he was quick to emphasise that India's stand on the NPT would not adversely affect Indo-German relations, thus contradicting the impression given by his earlier statements that Germany may link future ties with India to Delhi's nuclear behaviour.

Set against the sweeping endorsement of India's Kashmir policy by the Russian President Boris Yeltsin

during his recent Delhi visit, what Mr Kohl had to say on the same issue appears far more sensible and rational. Only a view utterly devoid of any concern for international morality and principles of justice can endorse Delhi's Kashmir policy, brutal and repressive as it is. That Mr Kohl refused to echo the stand taken by Boris Yeltsin on Kashmir and struck a sensible chord is good, but not good enough.

It will take much more than just exhortations and messages couched in carefully drafted diplomatic statements to hammer the point home to Delhi that what it is doing to the people of occupied Kashmir is a crime against humanity and cannot be condoned. India's continuing reign of terror in the Valley despite growing voices of protest from different domestic and international quarters is a testimony to this fact.

Similariy, on the nuclear front, too, countries like Germany and the United States, need to be more firm and fair in tackling India's nuclear ambitions and programme—the source of all nuclear evils in the region. This is primarily necessitated by India's longstanding obduracy in responding to proposals made by Pakistan to curb the proliferation of nuclear weapons and straighten the nuclear tangle in South Asia.

In this situation the ideal way to deal with India's nuclear programme is by conveying the message to Delhi in unequivocal terms that its inability or unwillingness to change its nuclear stand can cost it in terms of economic aid, even investment. The lever of diplomatic pressure, and particularly pressure from Germany and the United States, can also be applied to force India to rethink its Kashmir policy, which has become a major threat to regional peace and stability.

PRC To Build Cement Plant in Chakwal

BK2402151293 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] Under an agreement signed in Beijing recently, China will install a cement plant in Chakwal district. The largest ever cement plant exported by China will be installed by the China Building Material Industrial Corporation for Foreign Economic and Technical Cooperation. Both the sides also agreed to put up a joint venture of white cement plant near Shanghai. The agreement is in pursuance of the mutual desire of the two countries to enhance cooperation in the private sector.

Incentives Announced for Shipping Industry

BK2402151093 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 24 Feb 93

[Text] The Economic Coordination Committee of the Cabinet has approved a package of incentives for the shipping industry to attract the private sector investment. The committee met in Islamabad today under the chairmanship of the federal finance minister, Mr. Sartaj Aziz. The package includes exemption from levy of income tax for a period of five years on the income from the date of registry of the ship in Pakistan. The imports of ships would also be exempted from all fees and duties for a period up to December 1995. The meeting also reviewed the price situation of essential commodities in the country. It also took note of the stocking and movement position of the essential commodities and found that, by and large, it has been satisfactory. The committee enhanced the loan limit from 2 million rupees to 4 million for the establishment of a poultry farm with a view to increasing poultry production in the country.